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LETTERS OF WASHINGTON IRVING TO HENRY BREVOORT

Washington Irving

LETTERS OF

WASHINGTON IRVING

TO

HENRY BREVOORT

EDITED, WITH AN INTRODUCTION, BY

GEORGE S. HELLMAN

"Sub Sole
Sub Umbra
Virens"

NEW YORK

G. P. PUTNAM'S SONS

The Knickerbocker Press

1918

Copyright, 1915
by
G. P. PUTNAM'S SONS

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Autumn, 1918.

The Knickerbocker Press, New York

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PUBLISHERS' NOTE

G. P. Putnam's Sons present to the public with a sense of special gratification this series of letters written by Washington Irving to his friend Henry Brevoort. They believe that the volumes will be accepted as a contribution of exceptional value to American biography and American literature, and, in connection with the relations of close sympathy and of personal friendship that existed through a long series of years between Washington Irving and the late G. P. Putnam, they are well pleased to have the opportunity of associating the imprint of the Putnam House with a new work that will recall to the present generation the name and character of this distinctive American author.

The record of American literature presents no instance in which a great author and his publisher have proved more helpful one to the

other than were Irving and Putnam. Each in turn was able to render to the other at a time of need most valuable service. At a period late in his life, when Irving had received a discouraging report from his earlier publishers that his books were no longer attractive to the public and that there was no continued demand that justified the printing of new editions, Mr. Putnam put before the author a proposition for a complete and uniform edition which should include, in addition to the new books that Irving had in train, these earlier volumes, such, for instance, as the *Sketch Book* and *Bracebridge Hall*, that had been dismissed by their publishers as belonging to "dead literature."

The enterprise of Mr. Putnam more than justified the expectations of the publisher and the hopes of the author, and the publisher's sympathetic labour constituted an important factor in perpetuating and extending the fame of Irving. The letter below quoted gives

evidence that Irving was large enough as a man and wide-minded enough as an author to make frank acknowledgment of the value of the service rendered by his publisher.

"SUNNYSIDE, December 27, 1852.

. . .

"Let me say how sensibly I appreciate the kind tone and expressions of your letter. You talk of obligations to me, but I am conscious of none that have not been fully counterbalanced on your part; and I take pleasure in expressing the great satisfaction I have derived, throughout all our intercourse, from your amiable, obliging, and honourable conduct. Indeed, I never had dealings with any man, whether in the way of business or friendship, more perfectly free from any alloy.

"That those dealings have been profitable is mainly owing to your own sagacity and enterprise. You had confidence in the continued vitality of my writings. You called them again into active existence and gave to them a circulation that has, I believe, surprised even yourself. In rejoicing at their success, my satisfaction is doubly enhanced by the idea that you share in the benefits derived from it. . . .

"I remain, very truly and heartily, yours

"WASHINGTON IRVING.

"To GEORGE P. PUTNAM, ESQ."

The opportunity of the author to serve his friend, the publisher, came five years later. Mr. Putnam's firm was involved in the financial troubles that in 1857 undermined the business of the country and that proved particularly serious for publishing undertakings; and the plates of Irving's works came into the control of the author.

Irving received propositions from a number of publishing houses to take charge of the books, the value of which had now been fully recognized. He took the ground, however, that the books must remain in the hands of the Putnam publishing concern as long as the business was being carried on by a Putnam. He arranged that the plates which had come into his ownership should, in consideration of certain annual payments, again become the property of the publisher. The returns secured by Mr. Putnam from the sale of the books during the two years that remained of the author's life and for his nieces, after his

death, showed that the author's confidence had not been misplaced.

The present volumes contain unprinted material of unusual and intimate interest, which adds to our knowledge of the character of the great author. This production would not have been possible except with the friendly coöperation of the present owners of the manuscripts of these letters, and for this coöperation the publishers desire to express on their own behalf, and on that of the public generally, the fullest recognition.

The first acknowledgment is due to Mr. Isaac Newton Seligman, from whose famous collection of Irvingiana have been placed at the disposal of the publishers for use in this work the greater number of the letters written by Irving to Henry Brevoort. Mr. Seligman has for years interested himself in bringing together distinctive editions and original manuscripts of Irving's works. The library in his home at Irvington, which adjoins the

grounds at Sunnyside, contains a fascinating collection of material reminiscent of this most charming of authors. Mr. Seligman's public spirit is familiar to the community in which he lives, and he has taken a personal interest in furthering the publication of a work that should confirm and extend the memory of his favourite American author.

Cordial thanks are also due to Dr. Roderick Terry for a valuable series of letters, which he has, in like manner, placed at the disposal of the editor and the publishers. Dr. Terry belongs to a family whose home was for many years at Irvington. He has personal memory of the old-fashioned courtesy with which their neighbour, the great author, lifted his hat in response to the salute of his small neighbours, the Terry boys, as they drove by in their pony cart. He also feels a personal interest in the opportunity of collaborating in the production of a work recalling the memory of Irving.

PUBLISHERS' NOTE

Nine of the letters written to Henry Brevoort come from the library of the editor, Mr. Hellman, who has further drawn upon his collection of the papers of Irving in presenting in his Introduction material that had not hitherto found its way into print.

Acknowledgments are also due for friendly courtesy and for material to Mr. William Henry Brevoort, Mr. William Harris Arnold, Mr. Christian Gerhardt, and Mr. Thomas F. Madigan.

G. H. P.

New York, June 10, 1915.

INTRODUCTION

THE names of the two friends who figure in this correspondence have been made in many ways familiar to the New Yorker of to-day. One of our thoroughfares, reluctantly yielding old nooks and corners to the ever-grasping fingers of commerce, still retains some old-time flavor that one must hope will never quite disappear from Irving Place. Hotels, banks, schools, theatres, and business concerns of almost every conceivable nature have called into requisition the name of Irving. Nor shall we fail to find how, to a less extent yet similarly, has been employed the name of Brevoort, most notably in the delightful hostelry in that part of town which, in old days, included the farm of this noted family. But while these two names still play their part in the diversified life of our city, the individuals whose

character and achievement justified their significance have become remote figures. To renew our acquaintance with them, and to be led under their guidance into the pathways of the past, is the rich guerdon of those who shall read the letters of Washington Irving to Henry Brevoort.

The life of Irving, first and still the most distinguished of New York authors, has been written once and again; no need, therefore, of any lengthy rehearsal here, or critical estimate of his writings. One point alone shall be accentuated: and that is, in the pages of few other authors can we—restless, hurried, and over-practical men and women, of a restless, hurried, and over-practical age—find more gracious and leisurely wisdom, more courteous human philosophy than in the pages of Irving. His is the tonic of quiet art.

Henry Brevoort, Jr., the cultivated, efficient, and affluent citizen of the last century, be-

longed to a family that came to America almost three hundred years ago. A curious illustration of how distinguished his family yet remains in present-day estimation is shown in the *World's Almanac*, which, in its genealogy of well-known American families, still records the fact that the wife of the first John Jacob Astor was the cousin of Henry Brevoort. The oldest living descendant of the seventeenth-century founder of this family, has, with appreciated courtesy, given me information concerning his ancestors; and from a letter of Mr. James Renwick Brevoort, the nephew of Irving's friend, are quoted the following passages:

> "My father lived in the country and rarely spoke about family matters, and my uncle died while I was yet a boy. I have only a recollection of him and of his residence with the large garden, north of Ninth Street and Fifth Avenue.
>
> "I have heard my father say that Mr. Irving frequently came to see my grand-

father to get facts and suggestions for his Knickerbocker History of New York.

"Our family is descended from Heinrich Jan Van Brevoort who emigrated, together with his brother whose name I do not know, from Groningen in the north of Holland in the year 1642, Heinrich coming to Nieuw Amsterdam and the other brother to the Island of Nassau, now Long Island. There seem to have been two quite different types of the family, one tall, strong and light, with blue eyes, the other rather short, thick set, with dark eyes and hair. To the former belonged my grandfather and my father. My uncle Henry was of the short dark type. I have never heard anything of the descendants of the one who went to Nassau. My grandmother's name was Whetten, whose family were more or less seafaring people. My uncle William, 2nd son of my grandfather, was also a captain, and got out of N. Y. during the English blockade 1814–15 and took his vessel to sea. Besides my uncles Henry and William there was a younger brother who died in New Orleans of yellow fever when a young man, and Margaret who married James Renwick, afterwards Professor of Chemistry

and Physics in Columbia College. The Renwicks during my uncle's professorship of course lived in one of (the) college houses; afterwards, at the corner of Fifth Av. and Ninth Street. Henry had two sons, James Carson and Henry W.—four daughters, Elizabeth, Meta, Constance and Edith. My uncle Henry's wife was from Charleston, S. C., her maiden name, Laura Carson.—My Uncle Henry as probably you know was known to most of the literary people of his day, and wrote very well himself—chiefly, I think, as critic.—At one time my grandfather owned property from 8th Street and Fourth Avenue to 13th Street, and west, I think, beyond Sixth Avenue. As the city advanced it of course became necessary to sell a good deal of the property. My grandfather died in 1840, in the 94th year of his age. It was said in the family that the bricks which built the original homestead were brought from Holland. The front of the old house which was added long after was of wood with a piazza fronting on the then Bowerie. The house stood facing what is now 11th St.; this was prevented from being put through from 4th Av. to Broadway by my grandfather. There was an

old Dutch barn standing between 4th Av. and Broadway, the frame of which was hewn from oak timbers grown on the place. I have often heard my father say that, in *his* young days, there was no pavement above Chatham Square. Then the old Homestead was quite out of the City, and people would drive up to see my grandfather on a Sunday, he always having some sort of curious animal or bird of which he was fond of collecting. At one time he had a bear chained in his water melon patch west of B'way. Also a couple of deer. My grandfather was wheelwright by trade, and the shop formed a part of that old barn. In the old days traps were set on the asparagus beds and quails caught about where 10th Street and Broadway now are.

"In the early part of my uncle's life, he was in the employ of the original John Jacob Astor, and made long journeys into the then wilderness of the West to collect pelts for Astor, bringing them by packhorses and canoes to Albany, thence by sloop to N. Y.

"It was always said in the family that he was the first white man who ever saw the straits of Mackinaw—at that (time) spelled Mackinack."

Delightful it is to read thus of bears and deer on Broadway and of the old days when quails were caught where now the noise of traffic would drown the voices of many birds. Washington Irving was born in William Street in 1783, when the final treaty, bringing with it the fruits of the American Revolution, had not yet been signed between England and the United States, and the city of Irving's birth was still a town containing fewer inhabitants than are now housed in one or two square blocks of the crowded city of to-day. It was a sociable and intimate little city in which Irving and Brevoort grew to manhood, and perhaps the chief charm in the early letters, which began with the year 1807, is to be found in the glimpses they give of society, not alone in New York, but also in Philadelphia, Baltimore, and Washington. New York was then, in such contradiction to the present, a city of New Yorkers. We have indeed gained much from the influx of many races and nations;

yet a gain that does not altogether compensate for the civic solidarity of a day long past. Through the letters of Irving to Brevoort we lay firmer hold on traditions and re-enter into a heritage that the dwellers in our powerful but nervous, crude yet impressive city, have been prone to overlook.

From the point of view of the literary historian, the present volumes are of more than ordinary significance in that the manuscripts on which they are based have, for the most part, remained heretofore unpublished. The correspondence begins and ends with hitherto unknown letters. The intervening missives were, to some extent, drawn upon by Irving 's nephew, Pierre M. Irving, in the "Life and Letters" issued some fifty years ago; but, even for this, the editor availed himself mainly of excerpts; and while some of the letters were printed at considerable length, others were not used at all. Of the more than ninety now included, the manuscripts of, I believe, seven

are unobtainable. In some of these instances, recourse has been had to the passages from them in the biography by Irving's nephew. Apart from these, the letters are given in full, with proper names that, for obvious reasons, were omitted in the publication shortly after Irving's death.

With no other friend did Washington Irving carry on so voluminous a correspondence as with Henry Brevoort. It forms a record of friendship such as the annals of our literature nowhere parallels. It is not an exciting document; it contains, indeed, introspective analyses, but not in the morbid and sometimes thrilling manner to which later literary correspondences have accustomed us; and the veil of Irving's reserve is only now and then lifted to disclose the precious intimacies of his chivalrous soul. Often the tribulations of business affairs interpose their shadows; but, for the most part, it is a sane and cheerful record of a famous life.

And now, following the path of these letters, let us accompany Irving down the stream of the years. We find him first a genial, light-hearted youth of slight fame, prior to the publication of that book which is more intimately associated than any other with the name and traditions of our city—the *History of New York* by Diedrich Knickerbocker. He writes to Brevoort, on October 23rd, 1809, of the "minute and curious facts" which he has found in manuscripts in the Philadelphia Library, obliging him to make alterations in the first volume; and he asks his friend to forward the inscription on old Peter Stuyvesant's tombstone, the inscription which may still be seen in the church of St. Mark's in the Bouwerie. Irving's "delectable history" is, of course, a kindly satire on the old Dutch inhabitants, a volume that does not come into the class of scholarly works based on impartial research; but its position remains uncontroverted as the earliest production of an Amer-

ican man of letters to evoke the cordial praise and to awaken the sympathetic merriment of European readers. In December, 1809, after a series of notices in the *Evening Post* advertising the disappearance of its supposititious author, the book was published, "to discharge certain debts" (as the advertisement had it) "of Mr. Diedrich Knickerbocker, the old gentleman whose sudden and mysterious disappearance has been noticed." The success of Irving's humorous history was immediate, excepting among some of the descendants of those Dutch ancestors whom he satirized; and even now, after the lapse of more than a century, our city retains the sobriquet of Father Knickerbocker.

In the first few letters to Brevoort we move with Irving among a host of friends, for he was a most sociable young fellow, equally at home with men and women and children. The name of Mary Fairlie brings up recollections of one of the brilliant belles of Philadelphia, and

later the wife of the actor-manager Thomas A. Cooper. Among the private papers of Irving I find a letter written to him from this young girl who as "Sophy Sparkle" appears in *Salmagundi*, the whimsical magazine, joint venture of Irving and Paulding and Irving's brother William, which through its course of twenty numbers stimulated and amused New York in 1807. From this letter of Mary Fairlie, a few passages may be chosen to indicate the light-heartedness of the correspondence which she and Irving exchanged. "There was a brilliant assembly, last night, but solitude," she writes, "offered charms more congenial to my soul, and I did not go. I have grown very romantic of late, and shun the world, am enchanted with retirement, and if the fine weather continues, you may be surprised on your return to find me with book in my hand, sitting in the street, on the brink of a gutter under the shade of one of our great poplars. All your friends here

(barring the anguish which your departure has caused them) remain in perfect state of salubrity. The Hoffmans are all in good condition—Ann says *you are a shabby dog* for not writing to her."

The mention of the Hoffmans awakens a recollection of that event which overshadows all others in the record of Irving's life. His devotion to Matilda Hoffman, who died the year after Mary Fairlie's letter was written, continued long after her lovely life had ended. In his letter to Brevoort of May 11th, 1809, he writes from the home at Kinderhook of his friend Van Ness of the calmness and serenity with which the hours move along; but even so, between the lines there is to be found, with that reticence of expression which characterizes similar allusions in later years to the loss which had overwhelmed him at life's threshold, sentences evidencing the keenness of his grief.

It was in this same year that steamboat

navigation began with Robert Fulton's successful voyage on the Hudson, and the mention of these early steamboats by Irving records, in passing, the discovery that has so radically affected the commerce and the intercommunication of nations. In a more personal way we are brought into contact with events relating to the social history of early New York, referred to in Irving's comments on the home in the New Jersey highlands of Gouverneur Kemble, where the "Lads of Kilkenny" often met for their frolics. In addition to Irving, Kemble, and Brevoort, there were James Paulding, Henry Ogden, Peter Irving, and Peter Kemble among the "nine worthies" who constituted the little group so known; and in later life there are no references in Irving's letters more replete with affectionate sentiment than those in which he recalls the pastimes of this circle of friends. Irving at this time was still an inmate of his mother's house at the northwest corner of William and

Ann Streets. A little later—early in 1811—we find him sharing bachelor quarters with Brevoort, on Broadway, near Bowling Green. Brevoort's library may have been one of the inducements to this change; certainly these books proved a source of consolation when his friend went to Europe in 1812, remaining abroad for almost two years. It was during this journey that Brevoort met Walter Scott to whose attention he so successfully brought the writings of Irving. On Brevoort's return to America, the two friends continued dwelling together at "a choice house kept on a most liberal scale." This house stood at the corner of Rector and Greenwich Streets, and was kept by the Mrs. Bradish to whom, in the course of his letters, Irving constantly sends the kindest of messages. Among its other inmates were Commodore Decatur and his wife, Captain Porter, the Scotchman Johnson, the Portuguese Sampayo, the wine merchant March, and other per-

sonages that figure in the correspondence with Brevoort.

These old homes are now but memories; yet New York still retains various houses reminiscent of Irving and his friends. The dwelling of his uncle in Irving Place is one; another is the Society Library in University Place. Irving was a trustee of this institution, in whose halls there were heard the eloquence of Emerson, and the dithyrambs of Poe's *Eureka*. A third is the Renwick mansion, at the corner of Fifth Avenue and Ninth Street. Here the imagination wanders from the lyric years of Robert Burns, to our own days made brighter by the wit of Mark Twain, whose last years were lived in this old house. Jane Renwick, the mother of Irving's friend—James, the Columbia professor—was, in her girlhood in Dumfriesshire, admired of the poet, and of her Burns wrote:

> *"While men have eyes or ears or taste*
> *She'll always find a lover."*

Reverting to the year 1811 we shall meet with several lengthy letters written to Brevoort from the city of Washington. The first of these recounts Irving's journey to the capital by way of Baltimore—a journey "as full of adventurous matter and dire peril as one of Scott's pantomimic, melodramatic, romantic tales." Those were the days of the stage-coaches and amusing conversations with fellow-passengers; nor with less humor does Irving describe figures in Washington life of those times, and "the blazing splendour of Mrs. Madison's drawing-room." Particularly significant in connection with the development of his character is his statement in one of his letters from the capital, that he does not suffer party feelings to bias his mind; for Washington Irving is the only instance in American history of a man who, not alone keeping aloof from partisanship, but even experiencing a decided aversion to all political office, was offered high positions in many

fields of public life. That he was Minister to Spain is, of course, known to everyone; that he could have had, for the asking, a place in Congress is no less assured a fact; and that the Tammany Society "unanimously and vociferously" nominated the shy and stainless Irving to be Mayor of New York remains one of the most amusing of anomalous events in the records of our city.

During the years that preceded the War of 1812, Irving's main interest, outside of the round of social pleasures with his friends, was, I am inclined to think, not so much in literature as in the drama. We find him telling Brevoort that he has prolonged his stay at Philadelphia (in April, 1811) in order to see Cooke act as Lear. After comparing him with Cooper and Kemble, he writes at length of his performance, likening it to a "masterpiece of ancient statuary." In all his dramatic criticisms, Irving is able to separate essential excellence from "all the

garish ornaments in which unskilfulness takes refuge."

With the war between England and America a serious note enters into Irving's correspondence. Here he warns his friends of suspected spies, and comments on the unsettled state of the times with more mature understanding. But, even so, in such a letter as that of July 8th, 1812, he finds relaxation in social gossip and in amusing anecdotes concerning acquaintances. We meet with mention of the Rhinelanders, the Renwicks, and the Livingstons; we join Irving at a superb dinner given to the naval heroes, at which all the great eaters and drinkers of the city are present; and hear talk of armies, navies, and battles. The military spirit overtakes our gentle hero. He joins the staff of Governor Tompkins, and sends Brevoort accounts from Albany of the duties of his station and the progress of the campaign. On the reverse of the letter of September 26th, 1814, Brevoort

has recorded in his autograph a long list of firms that had failed within the space of a fortnight, a record that has for us the interest of coincidence when we reflect that just a century later England was to become involved in a far more decisive war.

The next year, war ended, Irving was free to gratify his wish to revisit Europe, ten years after his first journey abroad. When, on board the ship "Mexico," at Sandy Hook, he wrote his farewell letter to Brevoort, he did not foresee how long a time would intervene or how many events affecting his life would occur before he was again to return to the city of his affection.

The long series of letters, some of them containing thousands of words, in the satisfactory epistolary manner of the last century, that at comparatively short intervals he sent to Brevoort during the years in England, touch not alone on many phases of his own activities, but refer with the interest of a first-hand

observer to numerous important events and notable characters of the early nineteenth century. Napoleon and Waterloo and the Treaty of Ghent; Scott and Campbell and Isaac D'Israeli; soldiers like the Duke of Wellington; statesmen, publishers, critics, actors and painters, enter these pages, replete also with references to the activities of Irving, in connection with those business affairs which were to end, in one way so disastrously, in the failure of his brothers' firm with which he was associated;—and throughout there is talk of old friends, and of a longing for home. Brevoort had in the meanwhile not remained alone the pleasant companion of youthful days, but had developed into the generous adviser of Irving on all matters. It was, therefore, but natural that when, with the downfall of business plans, there came the strongest of impulses to devote his life to literature, Irving should look to Brevoort for such coöperation as a friend might offer.

Thus we have him taking charge of the publication of the *Sketch Book* in America, attending to the copyright, printing, and sale. In sending Brevoort the manuscript, Irving wrote: "I seek only to blow a flute of accompaniment in the national concert; and leave others to play the fiddle and French horn." But despite the modest attitude of its author, the *Sketch Book* did more than confirm Irving's own fame: it established the right of American letters to be accorded independent recognition. Caustic foreign critics who had hitherto looked upon our literature as a toddling and imitative infant, holding on to the apron strings of its English mother, realized that with Irving the time had come when it *was* worth while to read an American book.

At the age of thirty-six years, Irving had thus become an object of national pride. "Vanity," he writes, "could not bring the tears into my eyes as they have been brought by the

kindness of my countrymen"; and in another letter to Brevoort, wherein he mentions *Knickerbocker's History* and *Salmagundi*, as well as the *Sketch Book*, we find him saying: "There is something delightful to me in the idea that you in a manner stand godfather to all my children; I feel as if it were a new tie that binds us together."

By Nicholas Carter, Irving's friend who later became the author of a volume entitled *Letters from Europe*, was preserved an anecdote that amusingly and convincingly emphasizes the vogue of the *Sketch Book*. An English lady and her daughter were visiting an Italian gallery which contained a bust of George Washington. Carter overheard their conversation: "Mother, who was Washington?" asked the young lady, after gazing a short while at the bust. "Why, my dear, don't you know?" was the astonished reply. "He wrote the *Sketch Book*."

While Irving was engaged on this work

his friend Commodore Decatur was hoping that he would accept a place in the Navy Board at Washington, a first clerkship corresponding approximately to that of under-Secretary in England. Irving's brother William sought to persuade his acceptance of this position; and here, among Irving's papers, we find William's letter in its entirety. So closely allied are the sentiments in its concluding portion to those that animated Washington Irving himself as he grew older, that with sympathetic pleasure we rescue from oblivion the lines with which William ends his missive. He speaks of his own "only delight—retirement and seclusion from the world," and then goes on: "I never was cut out for a great politician. Trouble of every kind annoys me—I abominate parade, and like the maid servant who, when her mistress was to have a large company, asked for her supper that she might go to bed out of the way, I am for withdrawing from every scene of tumult

or confusion. A levee night is my abomination—and a public dinner my abhorrence. . . . I have, therefore, withdrawn, and feel most sensibly the truth of the proverb that 'home is home though never so homely.'"

If Irving, in the closing years of his life at Sunnyside, had had a younger brother in whom to confide, these might have been the identical words which he would have written. But the days of his youth show him far more susceptible to the attractions of society; though even then arose the moments of reaction. Among his papers is the draft, or perhaps a copy, of a letter written by him to Gouverneur Kemble when Irving was at Richmond, in 1807, taking a minor part at the trial of Aaron Burr. It is a long letter, too long for full rehearsal here; but the following passage shows its tenor:

"For myself I find I am declining very much in popularity from having resolutely and manfully resisted sundry temptations and invita-

tions to tea parties—stews—balls and other infernal orgies which have from time to time been celebrated by the little enchantresses of this place. I tried my hand two or three times at an apology for my non attendance, but it would not do, my usual ill luck followed me; for once when I alleged the writing of letters, it was plainly proved that I was seen smoking a cigar and lolling in the porch of the Eagle, and another time when I plead a severe indisposition, I was pronounced guilty of having sat at a young lady's elbow the whole evening and listened to her piano—all which brought me into manifest disgrace and reduced me to great extremity—upon the which I forthwith summoned up my pride, girded up my loins, foreswore all apologies in future and declared that I should thenceforward consider an invitation as an insult,—since which time I have had but little to complain of on that score, and enjoy sovereign independence and a perfect command of my time and person."

Despite Irving's desire for that freedom from social obligations which the preceding lines lightly make evident, his participation in Aaron Burr's trial was merely that of the interested observer who was at the same time a student of law. The value of this episode comes, for lovers of Irving, from the realization that with Aaron Burr, as with Napoleon Bonaparte, Irving could not altogether suppress a feeling of sympathy for a man of genius overtaken by fate. He did not forget that they were the victims of little enemies, as well as of their own great faults.

The mention of Burr inevitably suggests the most costly of American duels; yet it took more than the killing of Hamilton (who lies buried in the street where Brevoort and Irving dwelt together) to bring an end to a custom that led to the death of Irving's friend Commodore Decatur. Duelling in America was yet to become as obsolete as that piracy on the high seas which was swept into the past by

the victories of Decatur and his fellows in our war with Algiers.

That history should repeat itself is, I fancy, merely its way of emphasizing the constancy of the human equation, the significance of recurrent forces; but when such repetitions come in a form punctuated by centuries one must surmise that it is an act of courtesy of one muse to another, history realizing how literature has a leaning towards the phrase "just one hundred years ago."—But indeed, is it not strange that just one hundred years ago the United States, alone of nations, was making a determined stand for the rights of all nations on the highways of the sea? And in that war with the piratical nations of the African coast was not alone Irving's Commodore Decatur—from Rector Street,—but also the "little tar" Jack Nicholson, one of the chums of Irving and Brevoort.

Returning to the letters to Brevoort, it is manifest that the success of the *Sketch Book*

(written, for the most part, at the Birmingham home, "the Redoubtable Castle Van Tromp," of his brother-in-law, Henry Van Wart) forms the great and fortunate break in Irving's career. With all his philosophy, the drudgery, and even more than this, the worry of mercantile affairs affected many of the letters written in 1815–1818 from Birmingham and Liverpool. But even in this period of business affairs we shall find, as in his description of the queer human conglomeration in the hotel at Buxton, nuggets of literary art aglow with golden humor.

Between 1820 and 1825 his epistles to Brevoort were penned, with the exception of two London letters, in the happy metropolis of France, which, many years earlier, he had first visited as a care-free youth. Apart from French people, Irving now had as Parisian companions sometimes the poet Rogers and that jolly lyricist Tom Moore; again, from America would come Gallatin, Randolph, Astor, and others, bringing news

of home; while his works were ever achieving more success. We find him just touching upon commercial affairs, in connection with an enterprise for navigating the Seine by steam; a business in which he took a share more on account of his brothers Peter and William than for himself. There are various references to drafts on Brevoort, which of course in those days he was able to make with full knowledge of immediate repayment when due. The only note of resentment during this period of his correspondence was in connection with the query as to the possibility of his renouncing America, which he had left in 1815, and to which he did not return for seventeen years. His indignant denial took the convincing form, that shall be found in his letter of March 10th, 1821, and which renders manifest how truly the artist and the man was endeavoring to serve his country.

And here we pause a moment to emphasize

the entire validity and worthiness of Irving's argument. It is not alone the privilege but, it might well seem, the obligation of men of genius to follow their natural bent, yielding to their inclination in abstaining from political work, social movements and propaganda, and similar activities to which other serious and high-minded men may be devoting their energies. The artist and the author often make their contribution to human development of most lasting benefit by reason of their partial remoteness from the questions of the day. They move and have their being in that world of beauty and of ideas which is not bounded by the interests of any particular epoch, and their service, although imponderable in the scales of immediate social benefit, remain the lasting heritage of countless generations. The artist who, like Irving, is true to his own talent, is, in the final analysis, the fairest benefactor of mankind.

Irving's particular contribution in the field

of creative writing was the sketch-story. In one of his Paris letters to Brevoort, he shows his realization that this form of fiction was his own invention. "For my part," he writes, "I consider it merely as a frame on which to stretch my materials. It is the play of thought and sentiment, and language; the weaving in of characters lightly yet expressively delineated; the familiar and faithful exhibition of scenes in common life; and the half concealed vein of humour that is often playing through the whole—these are among what I aim at, and upon which I felicitate myself in proportion as I think I succeed."

Towards the end of his stay in Paris, Irving devoted considerable time to the study of Spanish, study which was to stand him in good stead during the next few years while he was engaged upon his *Life of Columbus*. His letters from Spain are among the most delightful in this correspondence, and lengthy documents indeed are those which he sent to

Brevoort from Madrid, Seville, and Valencia. His researches in Spanish history were based at first on the work of Navarrete, the noted Spanish historian, and this debt (which he fully acknowledged) led to some criticism after the publication of the *Life of Columbus*. But in the letters to Brevoort may be found Irving's refutation of every charge of plagiarism, and among Irving's private papers is an unpublished letter of Navarrete, showing that nothing had ever occurred to mar the cordial relations between the American and Spanish authors.

It was during the years 1827–1829 that the charm of old Spain wove its spell around Irving. The governor of the Alhambra had given him permission to live in a corner of the ancient Moorish palace, and his description of his residence there contains one of the most poetical passages in all his writings, a description with intermingling elements of beauty and of romance and the glamour of old days.

During this period, Irving became very friendly with the Russian diplomat Prince Dolgorouki, then an attaché of the Russian Legation at Madrid. After Irving returned to America in 1832, the Prince wrote him a letter which has never yet appeared in type. It is a long and charming letter concerning diplomacy and art; and it contains the following anecdote which must appeal to students of painting. "In visiting the Gallery at Amsterdam, whose chief ornament is a celebrated painting by Rembrandt, I found in one of the very last rooms of the Museum one of the most beautiful paintings of Murillo that I have seen since leaving Madrid. The Director of the Gallery had had it placed in the midst of a lot of bad copies of the Italian School, its frame touching the floor; and when I showed surprise that so great a master should receive so little regard, he answered that he thought ' 'twas enough honor for Murillo to find himself in the same room with a Van Dyck:' there, indeed, being,

by chance, a sufficiently dubious portrait by that artist, hanging above the great master of the School of Seville."

The charms of Andalusia, and all the attractions of that Spain which revived for Irving scenes from *Don Quixote*, were left behind in 1829, when Irving accepted the position of First Secretary of Legation under his friend McLane, then Minister to the Court of St. James. The next five letters are from London, where Irving was looking forward to meeting Brevoort, who had come to Europe. The revolution of 1830 was now occupying the attention of Europe, and we find Irving's comments on this "grand though terrible drama." The change in the American administration which led to the appointment of Irving at the same time involved the withdrawal from diplomatic life of his friend Alexander H. Everett, who had been the American Minister to Madrid during Irving's stay in Spain, a position that Irving himself was to occupy in

later years. His letter to Everett has found its way into type, but Everett's reply has remained hitherto among the unpublished papers of Irving, and is here drawn upon in view of the literary and philosophic spirit which animates it, and which is also characteristic of Irving. After congratulating his young friend, Everett continues: "As regards myself, you are right in supposing that my recall has not greatly disturbed my philosophy; I have been for some time past soliciting permission to return on leave of absence without any intention of revisiting this place. My taste is rather for literary and scientific occupations than for politics and I feel a strong temptation to consider the recent change in my position and prospects as a signal for retreat to devote myself wholly in future to letters."

In September, 1831, Irving resigned from the Legation. The end of that month marked

his final meeting with Walter Scott who had been so loyal a friend since the early days when he had first come to know the genius of Irving through the copy of *Knickerbocker's History* which Brevoort had sent to the author of *Waverley*.

A few months later, Irving was at last homeward bound. He returned to America a famous man, who for the remainder of his life remained one of the most distinguished and best beloved citizens of the republic. His career during the following years, his beautiful quiet life with his brothers and sisters and their children at his home of Sunnyside in Irvington, and the progress of his writings, do not come directly within the scope of this Introduction. Brevoort, with whom, of course, his correspondence now came for a time to an end, was again a near neighbor. We find an interesting reference to him in connection with the great fire which devastated New York in 1835, in a letter which was

written on Christmas Day of that year by Irving to his brother Peter: "Poor Brevoort," he writes, "has lost about fifty thousand dollars, and feels a little sore at the loss, but I trust will soon get over it, as he has an ample fortune left." The only letter that Irving seems to have written to his friend during these years is the brief note in which he suggests that Brevoort should join him in his visit to their old friend Gouverneur Kemble, whither now we find Irving going accompanied by his niece, Sarah Paris. There is a boyish note in these lines, suggesting the high spirits of the days of their youth.

In 1842 Irving and Brevoort were again separated by the width of the sea. Daniel Webster, as Secretary of State under Tyler, invited Irving to accept an appointment as Minister to the Court of Madrid. "I assure you," writes the greatest of American orators to the first of American men of letters, "it

gives me much pleasure to have been instrumental in calling you to so distinguished a post in the public service. If a gentleman of more merit and higher qualifications had presented himself, great as is my personal regard for you, I should have yielded to higher considerations."—"Ah! This is a nomination everybody will concur in!" Henry Clay had exclaimed when hearing of it. "If the President would send us such names as this, we should never have any difficulty." Irving accepted, not without reluctance at the thought of leaving "dear little Sunnyside." He took with him as attaché of Legation J. Carson Brevoort, the son of his dear friend; and in the letter that Irving wrote to Brevoort from Paris not long after reaching Europe, he says: "I am delighted to have him with me; my heart warms toward him, not merely on his own account, but also on your own. He seems like a new link in our old friendship which commenced when we

were both about his age or even younger, and which I have always felt as something almost fraternal."

The final letter in this series to Brevoort is dated November 25th, 1843. It was written from Bordeaux during a two or three months' absence from Spain, a trip which Irving made in the search for health. So serious was his affliction that the *Life of Washington* and all his other literary labors were suspended. His income from his writings was on the wane, and we find him expressing the hope that "I may again find some bookseller to take a lease of my published works and thus, by hook and by crook, may be enabled to return home and spend some few years with my kindred and friends before I die."—It must indeed be a source of gratification to those publishers who are so appropriately issuing the present work, to recall that it was their father, George P. Putnam, who reëstablished the vogue of Irving; with courage, faith, and sagacity re-

printing all former writings and bringing out new ones.

This last of the letters is one of those most worth reading. Touching upon literature, royalty, social affairs and diplomacy, it contains many paragraphs with sentiments worthy the remembrance. "In my diplomacy," we here find Irving saying, "I have depended more upon good intentions and frank and open conduct than upon any subtle management. I have an opinion that the old maxim *Honesty is the best policy* holds good in diplomacy." Here we have in a few lines the expression of American practice, it is to be hoped; and, certainly, of American ideals. With an amusing anecdote of "little Queen Victoria," the letter draws towards its end; and so it is this kind and gentle lady, a personage of our own times, who seems thus graciously to link us with the days of Irving.

Here, then, we leave this chain of letters which for more than thirty-five years bound

in loyal intimacy the old New Yorker, Henry Brevoort, and the old New Yorker who signs himself at the end of this correspondence with his friend:

"Ever most affectionately yours,

WASHINGTON IRVING."

O courteous citizen of elder days,
Gracious romance was thine, and kindly mirth.
Full well it is thy genius to praise;
But best, thy wisdom of goodwill on earth.

GEORGE S. HELLMAN.

NEW YORK: June, 1915.

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LETTERS OF WASHINGTON IRVING TO HENRY BREVOORT

Washington Irving.

LETTERS OF WASHINGTON IRVING TO HENRY BREVOORT

Skeenesborough, May 9th 1808.

MY DEAR BREVOORT:—

Here have I been embargoed by confounded contrary winds for five days—having arrived the day after you set sail—I feel extremely embarrassed how to proceed. The good folks at the line are so excessively strict that I dare not risk my silver across. I believe I shall sail for Burlington tomorrow if the wind favours & deposit my silver there—either getting gold in exchange or receipts from the cashier—which I am told I can get cash at par for, in Montreal from Merchants who wish to remit money to their agents in Vermont. I have about 9,000$ with me—look about if you can secure me good Bills. I am afraid

this will turn out but a lame business all round. I have heard of *Nuncles* getting through the trap—with the loss of *his tail;* and as for myself, I expect to rival honest Primrose's son Moses, in his great bargain of the green spectacles.

I entreat you not to leave Montreal until my arrival—we must return together. My Brother Peter is with me—and we are both at the house of Bully Rook, mine host of the *Garter*. We have nearly read through the library of the good Dame Quickly—who by the way is a great friend of yours. Enquire about, whether you can find any who will accept drafts on the Burlington Bank at par—remember me to our friends & believe me

Ever yours

W. I.

New York, June 11th 1808.

MY DEAR HARRY:—

McKenzie starts this afternoon and I snatch a moment from the crowd of avocations to scribble you a line if it is merely to let you know how much, how very much I long to see you. The fates, who I once for all curse for a set of perverse, ill-natured old maids—have most obstinately persisted in keeping us asunder during our travels, and I have no other method of baffling their malice, than to remain stock still in town until your return. I entreat you & believe me I do it most earnestly, and in the fullness of my heart, to come back as soon as your honest occupations will permit, for I never was more impatient to shake you by the hand, than I am at present. Our poor friend Mrs. R—— breathed her last this morning. I am now writing at the house of Mr. H. which is a melancholy mansion indeed. What between one melancholy event & another, and my own

fickle spirits, I find myself sadly depressed, but I am certain your return would perfectly revive me. I got home the evening before last and found our friends much I believe as you left them. You know that Mary Fairlie is down at Rockaway. Louisa & Maria Moore have gone down to keep her company. Ann is fair & beautiful as ever & full of fascination. You are a prodigious favourite of hers & seem to have won all the epaulettes &c &c, in fact you are spoken of with a degree of affection by the whole family, which I assure you has delighted me; for I wish all my friends to be thoroughly yours.

I shall not pretend to give you much news in this letter for it is an even chance whether McKenzie meets with you or not—but shall close with again begging you to let me see you in N York as soon as possible.

I am my dear fellow

Truly yours

W. I.

P.S. Mr. H. sent a letter to me by you which you were to leave in Albany. I never received it & hope you will be careful to bring it with you.

Kinderhook, May 11th 1809.

MY DEAR BREVOORT:—

I wrote you a hasty letter a few days since, and as Mr. Van Ness is about visiting the city I will scrawl you a few more, since they will cost you no postage. I feel much heartier than when I left town, particularly within these two last days; and have been able to resume my pen this morning, but not with much spirit—I am in hopes however, that I shall brighten up as I proceed. My time here, though I pass most of it by myself, slips off very pleasantly—and I find so little want of amusement to while it away, that for two days I have scarcely been out of the house. You would be highly pleased with a visit here—the house is spacious and judiciously planned and the surrounding country affords a variety of agreeable scenery.

The only country acquaintance I have made, is a schoolmaster who teaches the neighbouring children—a pleasant, good na-

tured fellow, with much native, unimproved shrewdness and considerable humour. As he is a kind of inmate at Van Ness's we have become very great friends and I have found much entertainment in his conversation.

Van Ness mentioned that he meant to invite you to return with him. If he does so, I wish you would accept his invitation. Perhaps the picture I have been giving of my situation may not be calculated to entice you from the city; for I own it has the features of dull monotony—but I assure you the hours move along here with a calmness and serenity, that, if I may judge of your feelings from my own, would be infinitely more gratifying than all the hurry and noisy mirth of more dissipated scenes.

If you should come up enquire of him whether he has looked at any of those things I left with him, and if he has done with any of them bring them with you. Should he leave

town for any time, I wish he would seal them up and leave them with my mother.

I wish you would procure me a bottle of that oil you used for your hair—the nervous fever with which I have lately been troubled has occasioned mine to come out a little—and I would wish to try your prescription—let me have it by Mr. Van Ness.

Write me if there is any more news about the Orator, the red man or any other topic of conversation. Does Cooper go out to England? How does King Stephen make out? and all the other chit chat of the day.

I have just time to finish & fold up my letter. Remember me to my friends the Hayslops &c.

Yours most truly

W. I.

Kinderhook, May 20th 1809

MY DEAR FELLOW:—

Mr. Van Ness mentions that you sent me a pacquet by the Steam boat but it has never come to hand. He says it contained a recent work called letters from the Mountain—but I am apprehensive that it contains some of my Mss. You cannot think how uneasy I feel—why did you not drop me a line in the post office at the same time to let me know a pacquet was coming—as to directing it to be left at Hudson, you might as well say *the bank of the river*—I know not where to look for it, or whether it has been sent ashore at Hudson or carried to Albany.

Do write me immediately on the receipt of this—if it is only a single line to put me out of suspense. If you have not forwarded any of the Mss. do not do so unless you or Peter K come up here. I would not have them sent by a chance conveyancer.

I hope Jim has nearly run through them—

I fear he will be too minute & either be very long about it, or tire himself out before he has got half way. I have almost finished—and in the course of a week hope to be released from my pen. I shall then drive with all possible dispatch to get completely done with the business and once more liberty, when I shall take up a regular course of study for the summer.

I shall return in the course of a fortnight—though my good friend Van Ness had insisted upon my staying until September. I have promised if possible to return here—and I rather think this will be my summer's retreat. It is exactly the kind of place I have long pictured to myself as an enviable summer's seclusion.

I have received a long letter from my worthy friend Peter Kemble, to whom I feel more gratitude for this mark of affection, than I can easily express. I wish you had come up with Van Ness so as to return with me—you may

yet take a trip here and accompany me down. If you come up & bring up the MSS. that are in Jim's hands—I will have occupation enough to keep me here some time longer. I wish you would do so. The country is heavenly—every thing is in bloom.

Farewell—I am writing at almost midnight and scarce know what I scrawl. Do not fail to write me word immediately about the pacquet—& who you sent it in charge of. Write by the very first mail after you receive this, otherwise it will make a difference of two or three days. Remember me to all and believe me

Yours most truly

W. I.

P.S. I wish Jim to save a little of his attention & critical industry for the remainder which I have in hand. I have not been able to do it the justice I would wish from not being in full health & spirits—I have done little more than copy off from my original scrawls.

Philadelphia, Oct. 23d 1809.

MY DEAR BREVOORT:—

I am so pressed for time that I have not been able to write to any of my friends in N York. I wish you would tell Mrs. Hoffman —James & Peter that I shall write to each of them as soon as I can find leisure, and do let me know how you are all coming on and what you are doing in N York. Is the little orator still faithful to his post? I am peculiarly anxious that he should persevere & succeed, and then he & his delectable Rib might love or hate one another as much as they pleased for aught I'd care.—I only chuckle to myself to think how the little man would be stumped, if he offered to read one of his dull pieces of wit, or sport one of his Johnsonian contradictions after matrimony.

I have been delayed in putting my work to press by some minute & curious facts which I found in a Mss. in the Phila^{d} Library & which has obliged me to make alterations in the

first vol. but tomorrow I begin—by God.

I wish you would immediately forward me the inscription on old P. Stuyvesant Tombstone—and get Jim as well as yourself to prepare some squibbs &c to attract attention to the work when it comes out.

I am my good fellow

Yours

W. I.

P.S. Ann & Charles are as loving and happy as two little robins in one nest.

NEW YORK, SEPTEMBER 22d 1810

New York, Sept. 22d 1810.

MY DEAR FELLOW:—

I engaged to write you a letter to Albany and this is scribbled in haste to keep my promise & *save my supper.* I had hoped before this to have had you in New York, but a letter I have just seen from you to Hyslop informs me that you will not be here until some time next week.

We have received news that poor L'Herbert is taken and carried into Plymouth—this I am afraid will knock up your French speculations. I see by this morning's papers that honest Sindbad has arrived safe in port—I mean to visit him tomorrow if I am in town. I am so much pressed for time that I cannot enter into a narrative of all that has come to pass among our friends since your departure, though I believe the catalogue of events would by no means be voluminous.

I passed eight or ten days delightfully at the Captain's Castle in the Highlands. He

lives in a royal bachelor style and is a true Lad of Kilkenny.

Charles & Ann are still here, but talk of leaving us tomorrow. Our Theatre has opened with as sorry a show of cattle as you could imagine we have known. Had Wood from Philadelphia to perform a few nights and he has acquitted himself admirably. I wish you had been here to get acquainted with him. He is a perfect gentleman in private life, and of the most amiable disposition and engaging manners. He has established a high reputation here.

Parker Hunt and the fair Clara, it is discovered were married in April last—at the house of your fair friend *Moshes*—I suppose of course you were in the feast. Old Jamey swears most horribly and so does his immaculate though ancient spinster of a Sister that the match shall be annulled, because Jamey was frightened into it by the handsome pursuer threatening to blow out the small

matter of brains he had in his head. Harry Buckley endeavours to put on a bright face and laugh it off—but he cannot get further than a *ghastly grin.*

The knowing ones are in fine order excepting little Sue who has had a sad inflammation in her eyes as a judgment from heaven on her for taking a jaunt on Long Island with that King of Beasts Dr. Romaine and his Buckram spouse.

As I have but just two minutes left to walk half a mile to pay half an hour's visit to Ann & Charles I'll conclude by assurances of friendship and affection.

Yours ever

W. Irving.

City of Washington, Jany. 13th 1811.

DEAR BREVOORT:—

I have been constantly intending to write to you, but you know the hurry and confusion of the life I at present lead, and the distraction of thought which it occasions, and which is totally hostile to letter writing. The letter however which you have been so good as to write me demands a return of some kind or another, so I answer it, partly through a sense of duty and partly in hopes of inducing you to write another. My Journey to Baltimore was terrible and sublime—as full of adventurous matter and direful peril as one of Walter Scott's pantomimic, melodramatic, romantic tales. I was three days on the road, and slept one night in a Log house. Yet somehow or another I lived through it all—and lived merrily into the bargain, for which I thank a large stock of good humour which I put up before my departure from N. York, as travelling stores to last me throughout my

expedition. In a word, I left home determined to be pleased with every thing, or if not pleased, to be amused, if I may be allowed the distinction, and I have hitherto kept to my determination. To beguile the ruggedness & tediousness of the road between Phil[a] & Baltimore I had an old acquaintance in the stage with me—Lieut. Gibbon of the Navy—whom I was well acquainted with in Richmond—& who is a true gentleman sailor & a very amiable pleasant fellow. He entertained me two whole days with a minute and agreeably related narration of the exploits of our little navy in the Meditterranean & particularly of the captivity of our officers in Tripoli—he having been one of the prisoners. I had a full and very entertaining account of all their misfortunes—plots—attempts at escape—pastimes, executions &c &c—with a very familiar picture of Tripoli and its inhabitants. All this was told with the simple frankness of a sailor & the liberal spirit of a gentleman. He

passed but one night in Baltimore but I have met him several times in company in Washington, where he is quite a favourite.

I remained two days in Baltimore where I was very well treated and was just getting into very agreeable Society when the desire to get to Washington induced me to set off abruptly—deferring all enjoyment of Baltimore until my return. While there I dined with honest Coale—(whose sister, by the bye, verifies the assertion of Mrs. Hopkinson, that she is handsomer than her picture). At his table I found Jarvis, who is in great vogue in Baltimore—painting all the people of note & fashion, and universally passing for a great wit, a fellow of infinite jest;—in short—"*the agreeable rattle.*" I am likewise waited on by Mr. Tezier, the French gentleman who has translated my history of N. Y. He is a very pleasant, gentlemanly fellow, and we were very civil to each other as you may suppose. He tells me he has sent his translation to

Paris, where I suspect they will understand & relish it about as much as they would a Scotch haggis & a singed sheepshead.

The ride from Baltimore to Washington was still worse than the former one—but I had two or three odd geniuses for fellow passengers & made out to amuse myself very well. I arrived at the Inn about dusk and, understanding that Mrs. Madison was to have her levee or drawing room that very evening, I swore by all my gods, I would be there. But how? was the question. I had got away down into Georgetown, & the persons to whom my letters of introduction were directed lived all upon Capitol Hill about three miles off—while the President's house was exactly half way. Here was a nonplus, enough to startle any man of less enterprising spirit—but I had sworn to be there—and I determined to keep my oath, & like Caleb Quotem, to "have a place at the Review." So I mounted with a stout heart to my room,

resolved to put on my pease blossoms & silk stockings, gird up my loins—sally forth on my expedition & like a vagabond Knight errant, trust to Providence for success and whole bones. Just as I descended from my attic chamber, full of this valorous spirit, I was met by my landlord, with whom, & the head waiter by the bye, I had held a private cabinet counsel on the subject. Bully Rook informed me that there was a party of gentlemen just going from the house, one of whom, Mr. Fontaine Maury of N. York, had offered his services to introduce me to "the Sublime porte." I cut one of my best opera flourishes, skipped into the dressing room, popped my head into the hands of a sanguinary Jacobinical barber, who carried havoc and desolation into the lower regions of my face, mowed down all the beard on one of my cheeks and laid the other in blood, like a conquered province—and thus like a second Banquo, with "twenty mortal murthers on my head," in a few

minutes I emerged from dirt & darkness into the blazing splendour of Mrs. Madison's Drawing room. Here I was most graciously received—found a crowded collection of great and little men, of ugly old women, and beautiful young ones—and in ten minutes was hand and glove with half the people in the assemblage. Mrs. Madison is a fine, portly, buxom dame—who has a smile & pleasant word for every body. Her sisters, Mrs. Cutts & Mrs. Washington are like the two Merry Wives of Windsor—but as to Jemmy Madison—ah! poor Jemmy! he is but a withered little apple-John. But of this no more—perish the thought that would militate against sacred things—Mortals avaunt! touch not the lord's anointed!

Since that memorable evening I have been in a constant round of banquetting, revelling, and dancing—the Congress has been sitting with closed doors, so that I have not seen much of the wisdom of the Nation, but I have

had enough matter for observation & entertainment to last me a handful of months. I only want a chosen fellow like yourself to help me wonder, admire, and laugh—as it is I must endeavour to do these things as well as I can by myself.

I am delightfully moored, "head & stern" in the family of John P. Van Ness—Brother of William P. He is an old friend of mine & insisted on my coming to his house the morning after my arrival. The family is very agreeable—Mrs. Van Ness is a pretty & pleasant little woman, & quite gay—then there are two pretty girls likewise—one a Miss Smith, *clean* from Long Island, her father being Member of Congress; she is a fine blooming country lass, and a great Belle here—you see I am in clover—happy dog! clever Jacob! & all that.

The other evening at the City Assembly I was suddenly introduced to my cousin the congressman from Scaghticoke—and we forth-

with became two most loving friends. He is a goodhumoured fellow & with all a very decent country member. He was so overjoyed at the happy coincident of our family compact, that he begged to introduce me to his friend Mr Simmons. This is a son of old Simmons of N. York of corpulent memory. By dint of steady attention to business—an honest character & a faithful fagging at the heels of Congress he has risen to some post of considerable emolument & respectability. Honest Simmons shook me heartily by the hand—professed himself always happy to see any body that came from New York—somehow or another it was *natteral* to him—being the place where he was *first* born.

Mat Davis is here, and "my brother George" into the bargain. Mat is endeavouring to obtain a deposit in the Mechanics Bank in case the U. S. Bank does not obtain a charter. Mat is as deep as usual—shakes his head and winks through his spectacles at everybody he

meets. He swore to me the other day—that he had not told anybody what his opinion was whether the Bank *ought* to have a charter or not—nobody in Washington knew what his opinion was—not one—nobody—he defied any one to say what it was—"anybody—damn the one—no sir—nobody knows,"—and if he had added nobody cares I believe honest Mat would have been exactly in the right. Then there's his Brother George—"damn that fellow—knows eight or nine languages—yes, sir,—nine languages—Arabic—Spanish—Greek—Ital—and there's his wife—she & Mrs. Madison are always together—Mrs. Madison has taken a great fancy to her little daughter—only think sir, that little child is only six years old and talks the Italian like a book, by God—little devil learnt it all from an Italian servant—damned clever fellow—lived with my Brother George ten years—George says he would not part with him for all Tripoli," &c, &c, &c.

I wish you would let me hear from you again. I shall remain some days yet at this place & when I leave my letters will be taken care of by Van Ness.

I received a letter from Mrs. Hoffman the day before yesterday. I would have answered it, but have not time—this letter will do for her as well as yourself. It is now almost one o'clock at night—I must to bed—remember me to all the lads & lassies—Gertrude, Miss Wilkes and the Bonny lasses in Greenwich street, whose fair hands I kiss.

I am my dear fellow

Yours ever

W. I.

Washington, Feb. 7th 1811.

DEAR BREVOORT:—

I am ashamed at not having answered your letter before, but indeed I am too much occupied & indeed distracted here by the multiplicity of objects before me, to write with any degree of coherency.

I wish with all my heart you had come on with me, for my time has passed delightfully. I have become acquainted with almost everybody here, and find the most complete medley of character I ever mingled amongst. As I do not suffer party feelings to bias my mind I have associated with both parties—and have found worthy and intelligent men in both—with honest hearts, enlightened minds, generous feelings and bitter prejudices. A free communication of this kind tends more than anything else to divest a man's mind of party bigotry; to make him regardless of those jaundiced representations of persons & things which he is too apt to have held up to him by

party writers, and to beget in him that candid, tolerant, good natured habit of thinking, which I think every man that values his own comfort and utility should strive to cultivate.

You would be amused were you to arrive here just now—to see the odd & heterogeneous circle of acquaintance I have formed. One day I am dining with a knot of honest, furious Federalists, who are damning all their opponents as a set of consummate scoundrels, panders of Bonaparte, &c &c. The next day I dine perhaps with some of the very men I have heard thus anathematized, and find them equally honest, warm, & indignant—and if I take their word for it, I had been dining the day before with some of the greatest knaves in the nation, men absolutely paid & suborned by the British government.

Among my great cronies is General Turreau —who, notwithstanding he is represented abroad as a perfect sanguinary ferocious blood-hound, I have found an exceeding pleasant

jocose companion, and a man of shrewdness, information & taste. Latrobe (who is excessively abused here as an extravagant spendthrift of the public money, &c) is very civil to me. I have been to two or three entertainments at his house, & dine there today with a choice party of intelligent & agreeable men.

To shew you the mode of life I lead, I give you my engagements for this week. On Monday I dined with the mess of Officers at the Barracks—in the evening a Ball at Van Ness's. On Tuesday with my cousin Knickerbocker & several merry Federalists. On Wednesday I dined with General Turreau who had a very pleasant party of Frenchmen & democrats—in the evening at Mrs. Madison's levee, which was brilliant and crowded with interesting men & fine women. On Thursday a dinner at Latrobe's. On Friday a dinner at the Secretary of the Navy's, and in the evening a ball at the Mayor's. Saturday as yet is unengaged—at all these parties you meet with

so many intelligent people, that your mind is continually & delightfully exercised.

The Supreme Court has likewise within a day or two brought a crowd of new strangers to the city. Jo. Ingersoll, Clement Biddle, Clymer, Goodloe Harper & several others have arrived—and one of your old flames Miss Keator, with whom Ingersoll is so much in love, as report says. There you see, my good fellow, how much you lost by turning back. This place would suit you to a fraction, as you could find company suitable to every varying mood of mind—and men capable of conversing and giving you information on any subject you wish to be informed. I may compare a place like this to a huge library, where a man may turn to any department of knowledge he pleases, and find an author at hand into which he may dip until his curiosity is satisfied.

What are you all doing at N York? I have not received a letter from there in an age. Do give me all the little chit chat of the town,

and I give you leave to pen it as slovenly as you please—I send you this letter as a proof how carefully a man may write to his friends. I have written to my brothers repeatedly, but have received no answers. I am tired of this kind of correspondence where the writing is all on my side & I wish you would tell them so. I am rejoiced to hear you have shifted your quarters, and I make no doubt that you will be happier by the change. How do the Wilkeses? I am truly grieved to hear that my good friend Mr. Wilkes has been one of the sufferers in these hard times. How do the knowing ones? Their brave McPherson (*the interesting young man* who wore regimentals, played on the flute & wrote bad poetry) is here as evidence in the case of Wilkinson. I hope you visit them and do not suffer them to feel abandoned.

How does Gertrude—Peter, Billy Taylor—Gilpin—old Konkapot curl? The King of Clouts &c &c &c wrote me three lines con-

cerning each of them. I charge you—had you but seen how eagerly I devoured your last letter—how I read it over & over & chuckled & laughed over it—I am sure you would have sat down immediately & wrote me another. I find by the papers & various other ways, that a new council is formed & the feds are all to be swung off at Tyburn Hill. Boss & the Mayor, it is said, are very contrite & sue for mercy—but in vain—"they die at sun rise."

Has Boss taken his flight to Philadelphia from the top of a steeple? As to Gill, he is like a little fat dunghill cock, that can't fly across the water—the Hudson I fear will be impassable to him this winter.

How are you likely to make out in respect to the man that failed? I hope you feel yourself safe among the breakers. I understand there are two new Performers arrived—what kind of animals are they? Write to me immediately I beg of you. Give my love to Mrs.

Hoffman and the Kembles & all my other friends—not forgetting the lads. Tell my brothers that when I receive an answer to any one of the letters I have written, I will begin to write again—but if I do before damme.

God bless you my dear fellow

Yours ever

W. I.

P.S. Your opinion of Walsh's review meets mine exactly. I am much disappointed in it, on a fair reading I even think his letters concerning France & England much tinctured with prejudice—the whole however shows great literary power.

Washington, March 5th 1811.

DEAR BREVOORT:—

Your letter sometime since concerning the modern feast of the centaurs and Lapithæ was truly heroic & historical, and I defy Dan Homer himself to present a more hideous battle than that of the puissant "King of Clouts." I received a letter yesterday from Peter the great who informed me of your recent trip to Phila. I wonder much that you did not intimate something to me of such a movement, we might have calculated so as to meet there.

I shall leave this city the day after to-morrow. I should have gone tomorrow but the stage books were full. You cannot imagine how forlorn this desert city appears to me, now the great tide of casual population has rolled away. The three or four last days have been quite melancholy. Having formed a great number of intimate and agreeable acquaintances, I have been continually taking

leave of persons for whom I had contracted a regard, and who are dispersing to various parts of this immense country, without much chance of our ever meeting one another again. I think nothing would tempt me to remain again in Washington until the breaking up of Congress; unless I might start off with the first of the tide. I have been detained by business at the comptroller's office, which after all has terminated unprofitably. I now begin to feel extremely anxious to be once more at home, and do not think I shall stop long by the way. I must, however, reconnoitre a little on our old seat of war at Philadelphia and at least find out what you have been about in your late secret expedition to those parts.

If you have not settled yourself permanently in lodgings at Mrs. Rumseys, I think you had better look out for a situation where the company will be more congenial to your taste & habits. As far as I recollect Mrs. R's

boarders are more to be admired for their talents at eating & drinking than anything else—as you are a man of very immovable disposition when you once locate yourself, it behooves you to be a little choice of the spot where you determine to take root.

I beg you "as you are friend, scholar & soldier" to give me this poor request, that you would write to me immediately, a full and satisfactory letter, touching affairs in New York, and also touching your late expedition to Phil[a], in which expedition I am told you played Squire to the ex-Recorder. Do not fail to write, my good lad, for you cannot conceive how earnestly I covet another letter from you—direct to the care of Charles & Nichols. And let me find the letter at Phil[a] when I arrive there. Let me know how you come on with the lads. Peter has hinted that he did not think the majestic Hen would ever find favour in your eyes, but Peter is a varlet and I cannot give my faith to his

assertion. No—no—my dear Brevoort—the mind—the mind! is what you must consult—and then thank heaven the diverse Hen was superior to "common ordinary mortals"—as my favourite poet says.

I am writing most execrably flat—and to tell the truth am in a deplorable humdrum mood this morning—but *allow*—a few cracks of the whip & shifts of the wheel will change the scene—and a few more will bring me once more among my cronies.

Give my love to all at Mrs. Hoffman's, the Kembles &c &c &c and so God Bless you all.

W. Irving.

P.S. About the time you receive this, I expect "my cousin" Knickerbocker will arrive in N. Y. I wish you would call at the City Hotel & look for him, and give him some attention among you; he is a right honest, sound hearted pleasant fellow.

Philadelphia, March 16th 1811.

MY DEAR FELLOW:—

I arrived in this city the day before yesterday, and was delighted to find a letter from you, waiting for me on Charles' mantel-piece. I thank you for this mark of attention, & for the budget of amusing and interesting news you have furnished me with. I stopped but four days at Baltimore on my return; one of which I was confined at home by indisposition. The people of Baltimore are exceedingly social and very hospitable to strangers; and I saw that if I let myself once get into the stream, I should not be able to get out again under a fortnight at least; so being resolved to push homewards as expeditiously as was reasonably possible, I resisted the world, the flesh, and the devil at Baltimore; and after three days & nights' stout carousal, and a fourth's sickness, sorrow, and repentance, I hurried off from that sensual city. By the bye, that little "Hydra and chimera dire," Jarvis,

is in prodigious great circulation at Baltimore. The gentlemen have all voted him a rare wag and most brilliant wit; and the ladies pronounce him one of the queerest, ugliest, most agreeable little creatures in the world. The consequence is that there is not a ball, tea-party, concert, supper, or any other private regale, but that Jarvis is the most conspicuous personage; and as to a dinner, they can no more do without him, than they could without Friar John at the roystering revels of the renowned Pantagruel. He is overwhelmed with business and pleasure, his pictures admired and extolled to the skies, and his jokes industriously repeated and laughed at. . . .

Jack Randolph was at Baltimore for a day or two after my arrival. He sat to Jarvis for a likeness for one of the Ridgeley's, and consented that I should have a copy. I am in hopes of receiving it before I leave Philadelphia, and of bringing it home with me. . . .

I was out visiting with Ann yesterday, and

met that little assemblage of smiles and fascinations, Mary Jackson. She was bounding with youth, health and innocence, and good humor. She had a pretty straw hat tied under her chin with a pink ribbon, and looked like some little woodland nymph, just lured out by spring and fine weather. God bless her light heart, & grant that it may never know care or sorrow! it's enough to cure spleen and melancholy only to look at her.

Your familiar pictures of home make me extremely desirous again to be there. It will be impossible, however, to get away from the kind attentions of our friends in this city, until some time next week, perhaps towards the latter end, when I shall once more return to sober life, satisfied with having secured three months of sunshine in this valley of shadows and darkness.

I rejoice to hear of the approaching nuptials of our redoubtable Highland chieftain, and hope you are preparing a grand Epithalamium

for the joyful occasion. Remember me affectionately to the Hoffmans, Kembles, etc.

Yours ever

W. Irving.

PHILADELPHIA, MARCH 18th 1811

Phil^{a} March 18th 1811.

DEAR BREVOORT:—

I write this letter merely to introduce to you Mr. Wm. Rogers of Rhode Island; who will be a fellow lodger of yours. I have seen considerable of him at Washington, Baltimore &c and am much pleased with him. Make him acquainted with Peter, Jim &c—and at Mrs. Hoffmans, the Lads or wherever you may be visiting—I am sure you will be pleased with him—ask him to ride Amy Darden's horse for you a little—I shall be with you in a few days, and then we will look out for Gouv and prepare for the captain's Hymeneals.

Yours ever

W. I.

PHILADELPHIA, APRIL 11th 1811

Phil^a April 11th 1811.

DEAR BREVOORT:—

I have neglected answering your letter from an expectation that I should have been home before this; but I have suffered day after day to slip by, and here I still am, in much the same mood as you are when in bed of a fine genial morning endeavouring to prolong the indolent enjoyment, to indulge in another doze, and renew those delicious half waking dreams that give one an idea of a Mussulman's paradise. I have for a few months past led such a pleasant life, that I almost shrink from awakening from it into the commonplace round of regular existence—"but this eternal blazon must not be" (Shakespeare) so in two or three days I'll gird up my loins, take staff in hand and return to the land of my fathers. To tell the truth I have been induced to stay a day or two longer than I otherwise would have done, to have the gratification of seeing Cooke in Kitely & Lear;

the first he plays to night, the other on Wednesday. The old fellow is in great repute here, and draws excellent houses. I stopped in accidentally at the theatre a few evenings since, when he was playing Macbeth; not expecting to receive any pleasure, for you recollect he performed it very indifferently in New York. I entered just at the time when he was meditating the murder, and I remained to the end of the play in a state of admiration and delight. The old boy absolutely outdid himself—his dagger scene, his entrance to Duncan's chamber & his horror after the commission of the deed completed a dramatic action that I shall never forget as long as I live—it was sublime. I place the performance of that evening among the highest pieces of acting I have ever witnessed—you know I had before considered Cooper as much superiour to him in Macbeth, but on this occasion the character made more impression on me than when played by Cooper or even

Kemble. The more I see of Cooke the more I admire his style of acting—he is very unequal, from his irregular habits and nervous affections—for when he is in proper mood, there is a truth and of course a simplicity in his performances that throws all rant, stage trick & stage effect completely in the background. Were he to remain here a sufficient time for the public to perceive & dwell upon his merits and the true character of his playing, he would produce a new taste in acting. One of his best performances may be compared to a masterpiece of ancient statuary; where you have the human figure destitute of idle ornament, depending upon the truth of Anatomical proportion and arrangement, the accuracy of character and gracefulness of composition—in short a simple display of nature. Such a production requires the eye of taste & knowledge to perceive its eminent excellences; whereas a vulgar spectator will turn from it to be enraptured with some

bungling workmanship, loaded with finery & drapery, and all the garish ornaments in which unskillfulness takes refuge.

Sully has finished a very fine and careful portrait of Cooke—and has begun a full length picture of him in the character of Richard. This he is to receive 300$ for from the gentlemen of Phil[a] who opened a subscription for the purpose, which was filled up in an hour. The picture is to be placed in the Academy of Arts.

I rode out yesterday to your country seat in the neighbourhood of this city. It is in a state of great neglect & very much out of order—I would advise you to see it without delay.

Walsh's 2d number will be out in two or three days; I have seen it, but have not had time to read more than a few pages of a masterly review of Hamilton's works. I think the number will do him great credit.

Give my love to all who love me and remember me kindly to the rest.

Yours truly

W. I.

New York, May 15th 1811.

DEAR BREVOORT:—

The *Great Mandarian* has just informed me that there will be an opportunity to forward a letter to you on friday, so my dear Boy, though hurried almost unto death, yet I will endeavour to indite a little epistle which may follow you even unto your savage haunts, and be as welcome to your fainting spirits, as was a drop of water to Hagar of yore, when drooping in the wilderness. Since you left us, I have been a mere animal; working among hardware & cutlery. We have been moving the store, & I (my pen weeps at the very thought of it) have had, in this time of hurry and confusion, to lend all the assistance in my power, and bend my indolent & restive habits, to the plodding routine of traffic. But this is only a temporary sacrifice. Shut your eyes, oh, ye blessed Muses, lest ye afterwards look upon me with scorn! By all the martyrs of Grubstreet, I'd sooner live in a garret, &

starve into the bargain, than follow so sordid, dusty, soul killing a way of life; though certain it would make me as rich as Old Croesus, or John Jacob Astor himself.

I am in quiet possession of your room, and am very much pleased with my situation. Mine host & his wife are a very obliging agreeable couple. I hope you will be induced to take up your quarters with us when you return. You need not fear *shocking the feelings* of Mrs. Rumsey, as she expects it.

Charles and Ann arrived here last evening. They are both hearty, and their little girl more beautiful than ever.

May 16th. I was interrupted in this letter yesterday. Last evening I was at a tea party at Mrs. Hoffmans—rather a stupid one—the piano was out of tune & they had been unable to get it put in order, so we were disappointed in the Musical treat we had promised ourselves—Charles sung one or two songs

without accompanyment. Your Sister was there. She came in town the evening before, to go to the play with Mrs. Renwick at whose house she is on a visit of two or three days. She is quite a favourite with the Bonny Widow.

I have scarcely seen anything of the Lads since your departure, business and an amazing want of inclination has kept me from their threshold. Jim, that sly poacher, however, prowls about there, and vitrifies his heart by the furnace of their charms. I accompanied him there on Sunday evening last, and found the Lads & Miss Knox with them. Sue was in great spirits, and played the Sparkler with such great success as to silence the whole of us excepting Jim—who was the *agreeable rattle* of the evening.—God defend me from such vivacity as hers, in future. Such smart speeches without point or meaning—such bubble & squeak nonsense. I'd as leave stand by a frying pan for an hour and listen to the

cooking of apple fritters. After two hours dead silence & suffering on my part I made out to drag Jim off, and did not stop running until I was a mile from the house—I have not been able to go there since—but I hope the humour will return again. All this *entre nous*.

The Heir Apparent is in close siege of the little Heiress near the park; with the whole influence of Pistareen Johns family opposed to him. Peter has been obliged to lay by his buckram dignity and bow to Belial, or what is the same thing—to shake hands with Alex Stewart. Whether he will carry his point or not is a matter of very great doubt to me, as Peter is very much given to play truant from his post, and run after sundry little damsels about the city. Little Miss Gouverneur; the Little Macombs of Bellville, &c, &c have at different times seduced him from his allegiance —and in two days philandering he has lost the headway of a fortnight courtship.

The noble captain was married shortly after

your departure, and immediately fled with his turtle dove to the groves. I have bet a coat with John King that he would have occasion for a nursery within two years, and I feel no apprehension of losing.

Mrs. Colden has lately been to Phil[a] with Alice Ann and the fair Angelica & her Sisters. Mrs. C. returned a few days since and left Angelica & Julia there, where I am told they are making sad havoc among the Beaux. Mrs. C. gave a tea party on her return, by way no doubt of a rejoicing. I was there, and made my entry in the back room, where I found Peter in full blast of gallantry & eloquence, with a fan in one hand and nosegay in the other, declaiming in a true Will Honeycomb style to a knot of little blossoms; one of whom I soon found out was little Miss Beach. Among the other turtles who were pairing at this convocation was Old Satan and Mary Fairlie. It would have amused you to see Cooper playing softness and suavity.

The Divine Kitty was likewise there, but I bethought me of the Smoky Chimney, and kept at a wary distance.

May 17. The arrival of Ann & Charles has been the signal for a host of little rascally tea parties; There was one at the Douglas last evening,—but I swore off & went to the theatre. Your Sister Margaret went there under the protection of Mrs. Renwick. I can't stomach these omnipresent Douglasses —they break in every where, with such a troop of retainers & mosstroopers at their heels that I should be fearful of relapsing into barbarism in their society. And then there is Cousin Betsy—riggd out in fierce blue silks with diamond necklace, breastpins, broaches, ear-rings bobbs & three score rings on each finger, that I never see her without thinking of some of the eminent pawnbrokers ladies I have seen in London.

Sam Swartwout arrived from England a few

days since, as rugged & hearty as ever I saw him. Cooke & Cooper have been playing together for several nights the old fellow's Iago was admirable & threw Othello in the background in my opinion. He has however been sick & humbled & reduced most confoundedly so that the second time he played Iago he was comparatively languid. Cooper has not used him quite fairly I think. He got up Alexander the great that he might rant-about in fine clothes & Old Cooke be sunk in the inferior part of Clytus. The Old Boy however, in the two or three passages where he had a chance, came out nobly and received great applause. As to Cooper he was so hugely begilt and betinselld, that the finery outdazzled itself, and he looked not unlike a pyramid of macaroons, bedizzened with sugar candy.

Last night nothing would serve Cooper but he must have the play of the fair penitent, though several remonstrated with him and

numerous parties of ladies declined going. Cooper however, was bent upon playing up to Old Cooke in Lothario. Here he was sadly disappointed. His Lothario has become [a] terrible formal heavy fine gentleman & in the scene between him & Horatio Old Cooke completely bore away the palm, receiving applause at every speech, while Cooper was not cheered by a single clap. On Monday they play Pierre & Jaffier on Wednesday Cooke plays King John for his benefit to Coopers Faulconbridge. On friday they conclude by a repetition of Othello—& then adieu to the theatre.

We received long letters from Little Johnny Fig a few days since. He has been a *cocao planter* in Trinadad, and writes in great spirits —by his account he is likely to do very well. A gentleman of property has befriended him— and advances all the funds, purchases the plantation negroes, &c & John is to receive half the profits for his attention and labour in superintending & managing it.

I am languishing to return to my books and my pen, but this moving of Merchandize and the attendant hurry has completely broken in upon my time and habits—I hope, however to begin next week well, and once started, I feel certain I shall go on prosperously. Had I my choice I would go into the country, and busy myself among the groves for the whole summer, but I rather think I shall pass the greatest part of it in the city.

I rode out to Mrs. Renwicks place yesterday & walked over the Scenes of last Summers pastimes—but some how or another my mind was so bewildered & poisoned by worldly thoughts and cares that the sweet face of Nature had not its usual effect upon my feelings. I'm weary of company & dissipation—I have gone through such a variety this last winter, that I am perfectly sated for the present; and feel no disposition to visit or mingle in any scene of amusement. I'd give anything to be accompanying you through the

sublime solitudes of our Savage country. I feel as if I could sit for hours and muse deliciously on the borders of one of our vast lakes—or on the summit of one of our solitary promontorys in the highlands as I did last summer. Or in fact any where where I had not to listen to the tedious commonplace of fashionable society—and had some of the grand scenes of nature to occupy my mind. I have been mingling in company for some days past, without any soul or spirit—a mere vacant carcass of a man—sunk in apathy & indifference. Not that I feel anything like gloom or ill humour—it is a languor of the mind—or rather my mind is tired of being mocked with trifles & mere amusement, and craves food, occupation, and its own society. This makes me restless and unsatisfied, though surrounded with pleasure. As I know the malady however I feel no fear of speedily curing it.

McGillivray and the honest, hard favoured

NEW YORK, MAY 17th 1811

James Cameron arrived here a few days since, and the former will probably hand you this letter. I have I believe written pretty nearly all I have to say—and this letter is made up of such trifling chit chat and such trifling topics that I should be ashamed to send it to any body but yourself. You may see from the tenor of it, in how slip slop a manner I have been passing my time. But this is transient & temporary prodigality of life & talent—I will make up for it all, when I turn to busy occupation.

I expected to have heard from you before this, but I find nobody has had a line from you, but *Dashwood*, so I shant complain. God bless you my dear fellow and keep you sound, prosperous & happy.

Affectionately yours

W. Irving.

New York, June 8th 1811.

DEAR BREVOORT:—

L'Herbette has just informed me of an opportunity which departs today of writing to you. I am half inclined not to use it, as you remained several days at Montreal without writing me a line, though Judge Ogdens family afforded a certain and speedy conveyance. I wrote you a long letter by McGillivray which I suppose you have received. Nothing of particular moment has happened since the writing of that epistle excepting the arrival of the most noble Patroon, who has once more resumed his sway over the club. Gouv has had a long and boisterous voyage in an old leaky hulk of a british ship, with a mutinous crew and a nincompoop Captain. He & Ben Seaman were so tired of their ship that they quit her about 150 miles from land & got on board a coaster by which after being tossed about 4 days they were landed at *Folly landing* in Virginia & got home in a

week more; having by this *short cut*, arrived here in little more than 8 days *after* the ship, which made the light house in 20 hours after they quit her. Gouv has now been home three or four days, and has already become so regular, and domestic, and has fallen so exactly into his old habits, that it begins to seem as if he had never been away from us. I never knew a fellow so little changed by European travelling. His looks too are much the same, excepting that he is a little sunburnt, but he is still as spare and gaunt as a greyhound. Since his return we have treated Peter, the late Prince Regent, with great contempt, and take all possible occasions to flout him. . . . Peter however consoles himself by courting all the little girls in town, who are under sixteen; for you must know this old lecher has become so dainty and sickly in his palate, that nothing will go down with him but your squab pidgeons and your first weeks green pease. . . . He reminds me most

powerfully of the old duke of Queensbury whom I used to see, wheeled out in his easy chair, to the porch before his door, that he might ogle the wenches as they passed by. But Peter is a "Dam rascal" and there's an end of it.

As to the Lads I have seen them but once or twice since that memorable evening of which I wrote you. I passed an evening with them about a week ago at Miss Wilkes, and as they did not attempt to sparkle, they did very well. But I am weary of gossipping, and have almost entirely left off visiting for some time past; it will become amusing again by next fall. I do want most deploreably to apply my mind to something that will arrouse and animate it; for at present it is very indolent & relaxed; and I find it extremely difficult to shake off the lethargy that enthrals it. This makes me restless and dissatisfied with myself, and I am convinced I shall not feel comfortable & contented until my mind is fully employed.

Pleasure is but a transient stimulus, and leaves the mind more enfeebled than before; give me rugged toil, fierce disputation, wrangling controversy, harrassing research, give me anything that calls forth the energies of the mind, but for heavens sake shield me from those calms, those tranquil slumberings, those ennervating triflings, those syren blandishments that I have for some time indulged in, which lull the mind into complete inaction, which benumb its *powers*, and cost it such painful & humiliating struggles to regain its activity and independence.

I am ashamed to say that I have not been out to your father's since your departure. I have however frequently seen Margaret at Mrs Renwicks, with whom she is a great favourite; and who is a friend worthy of her cultivating. Your family I believe are all well; I suppose L'Herbette will give you particular accounts of them.

Cooke & Cooper played here several nights

to very good houses and are now performing at Baltimore. Since their Departure, King Rusher kindly gave Duryea six nights engagement; during which time he played as might be expected to empty boxes, and will probably clear 50 Dollars by his engag^{t}. Write to me by the first opportunity & believe me, ever

Yours truly

W. Irving.

New York, August [?] 1811.

DEAR BREVOORT:—

Dennis has come home laden with anecdotes of your expedition, and yourself. According to his account you landed safely on your head at Benny Cornwalls at seven in the evening & flourished your heels in the air for joy. He relates long conversations which he has had with you about the fair Julia besides several tender things which you said in your sleep; from all that I can learn, you must have rehearsed some of the capers that the renowned hero of LaMancha cut in the mountains, and sent Dennis as your discreet & faithful Squire, to report them to Dulcinea. Dennis Sampayo (a Portuguese) has fairly knocked March's Brains out with a Quotation; and turned our house perfectly up side down with laughter at his good speeches. I question whether the sage Panza ever occasioned more jollity in the Duke's household than Dennis did this afternoon among the gentle-

men of the Supper Room. Poor Mrs. Bradish was nearly annihilated by the shouts of able bodied laughter from that fat Varlet March. Dennis informs us that he and you keep a journal which is so exquisitely humourous that Mrs. Cooper on only looking at the first word fell into a fit of laughing that lasted half an hour. We look forward with vast expectations to the perusal of this manuscript.

We all sent an Invitation in form to the Commodore & his lady to dine with us this afternoon but they declined on account of the heat of the day & invited us to tea & gin in the evening. We went over there in full force & passed a very pleasant evening. They dine with us tomorrow.

Monday Morning. I have laid out your spy glass, boots, chessmen &c. & had thoughts of sending all the other nicknacks I could find in your draws; but had thought it best to reserve the rest until you have tired yourself with these. The flute is not in the draw; for

which I am very glad—I do not think it would be an innocent amusement for you; as no man has a right to entertain himself at the expense of others. Dennis is full of business. He has to bustle out to your sisters—then to Mrs. Cooper then home & then the Lord knows where—it is a proud day for Dennis.

He mentioned as a great mark of Mrs. Cooper's politeness that she told him on their ride up, "Dennis don't be so bashful or constrained, if you feel sleepy take a nap whenever you please." We all assured him that such vast indulgence could only be in consequence of his having made himself wonderfully agreeable. I beg if you make any stay you would contrive to dispatch Dennis up to town from time to time to report progress; he has given the household a good month's laughter in the course of a hand full of hours. Don't omit to keep him at his studies of Shakespeare—he hints that Cooper begins to be a little jealous of his dramatic powers.

NEW YORK, AUGUST [?] 1811

I should like to pay Rockaway a visit this week, but I have allowed the little major to take a holiday & go to the country with his wife & little Trudgens & must play merchant for a few days.

My horse is doing well & according to Patrick's account eats his oats like a Gentleman.

Yours truly

W. I.

New York, March 17th 1812.

DEAR BREVOORT:—

I write this letter in haste, merely to apprise you of the development of Henry's real character and schemes, which have come to light since your departure. Perhaps he may have told his own story to you, *in his own way*, but from the full disclosures he has made to our Government, & which have been published, there is but one opinion here, which is, that Henry is an unprincipled and dangerous character. By his own account he has been prowling about this country as a British spy, & was employed by Mr. Craig in 1809 to visit the Eastern States, ascertain the state of politics, and if there was any disposition to rise in opposition to the General Govt in case of a continuance of the Embargo; and if so, to offer the assistance of the British. This righteous mission was rendered unne-

cessary by the arrangement of Erskine. Henry has been disappointed in his hopes of recompense from the British Ministry, and partly out of revenge, and partly as it is said, on conditions of a large *douceur* & assurance of personal protection, has revealed the whole affair to our Government. I do not pretend to enter into the particulars of the transaction, you will doubtless hear it at large from other quarters. I only write in haste and anxiety, to charge you at once to break off from this dangerous man. How far his true history may yet be known, or how far he may have completed the desperate game he is evidently playing — it is impossible even to conjecture; but he is evidently a man far gone in the dark paths of deception and perfidy, and now that the mask is pulled off, may become bold faced and unhesitating in his enterprises.

I have been to all the editors, and prevented your name from being mentioned as fellow

passenger &c &c. Zachy Lewis had already mentioned you as one of the bearers of dispatches and Lang was laying his finger beside his nose, and knowingly inserting the initial of your name. This, however, was before Henry's affair was known. Since then, though the papers have been full of him & his mysterious departure, they have faithfully kept their words and not mentioned you. I feel extremely for the pain that this discovery will give you, for it is always a horrible shock to the heart to find we have been placing confidence and friendship in a deceitful & worthless character.

I have not been very well since your departure, and am completely out of Spirits, I do miss you terribly. I dined yesterday with a small party at Mrs. Renwicks and was at a tea party in the evening, and yet passed one of the heaviest days I have toiled through this long time.

Your commission has arrived from the

Governor and I will forward it to you by one of the present opportunities.

Your family are all well.

God Bless you my dear fellow.

Yours ever

W. I.

New York, March 29th 1812.

(*Excerpt from a missing letter of Irving to Brevoort*).

I have been so much occupied of late, partly by a severe indisposition of my good old mother (who has, however, recovered), and partly by my History, that I have not had time to write you a letter worth reading. I will atone for it hereafter. I have concluded my bargain with Inskeep and am about publishing. I receive 1,200$ at six months for an edition of 1,500 copies. He takes all the expense of printing, etc., on himself.

NEW YORK, JULY 8th 1812

New York, July 8th 1812.

DEAR BREVOORT:—

The unsettled state of the times, and the uncertainties of your movements almost discourage me from writing to you, lest my letter should never come to hand—which, considering the great aversion I have to letter writing and the great trouble it costs me to manufacture an epistle, would be a vast deal of labour thrown away. But I will now draw my bow at random and trust to providence that my shot may reach you.

I am at present rusticating at a little snug retreat about six miles and half from town, on one of the hills just opposite Hellgate, and within a stone's throw of William Paulding's country seat. I am very pleasantly lodged in a French family, with a wood around me and a beautiful peep at the sound. Here I have settled myself for the summer & part of the fall to read, and, if it please heaven and the muse, to write. I have a very pleasant

neighbourhood—the Rhinelanders & Gracies living within ten minutes walk of me. I intend, however, in the course of three or four weeks, to voyage up the Hudson and see the fair nymphs of the Ferry House. Those exquisite *creatures* left town about a fortnight since, and took Miss Dallas with them. She had been about three weeks in N York, and had made great havoc round her. The heir apparent, that liquorish young rogue, having just crawled out of the powthering tub, and being well primed with Mercury—was among the first to feel the force of her charms; and followed faithfully in her train to the very last —not without suffering greatly from sundry long walks of hot days, which put him back very much in his complaint. The very day they left town he departed for the Highlands, where he and the Captain are two to two, drinking Madera, discussing politics and morals, and both disputing very positively on the same side of the question.

As to the Captain he has taken me in for a coat, as I see no hopes of an increase to his family, and my bet with John King will fall due next spring. I have no chance for some months at least as the Captain is so down & out with war, that I do not believe he has animal spirits enough to go through the necessary operations.

I am extremely anxious to hear how you conducted in respect to Henry. I was very fearful that he might be able by some plausible story told in his plausible manner, to glaze over his conduct and interest your sympathy in his favour. In the United States there is but one sentiment respecting him; that of the most thorough contempt. He is regarded as an unprincipled adventurer, with shewy but superficial talents and more cunning than wisdom. I hope the letters I wrote to you had their proper effect in detaching you from him entirely and immediately.

I have not seen your parents for some time

past. The distance I live from town makes it inconvenient for me to call there, particularly as I do not keep a horse, and have to depend upon chance conveyances to the city. I saw Margaret lately at Mrs. Renwick's. She informs me that Miss John has returned from Canada, having, according to David Ogden's account, learnt all that it was possible for mortal man to learn in his situation. I mean to call in the course of a day or two and see how the young gentleman talks and looks after his travels.

The marriage has at last taken place between Mary F[airlie] and Cooper. They were married at his new house. Neither Mr. nor Mrs. F. were present, nor any one excepting King Stephen and his spouse. After the ceremony was performed Cooper attended her home and left her—and two or three days later they set off to Baltimore. The old Major was worried into a kind of half consent. That is to say, if the girl could not be happy without

it, why, he supposed it must take place. Cooper has been applying for a Lieut. Colonelcy or a Majority in the army; but I believe he's not succeeded. I was told yesterday that they had returned home again. Such is the end of a dismal courtship and the commencement I fear of an unhappy union.

I hinted in the former part of my letter that the heir apparent had not been in the *powthering* tub; but I did not consider that this misfortune had happened to him since your departure. I don't know but that part of the sin lies at your door, for I believe it was from one of your virgins that he received the blessing. I was for some time at a loss what to make of the little man's manoeuvres. He would have a large tub of hot water brought into his room and then shut himself up for an hour with his man Torey, as if he was intent upon some informal initiations. I happened to enter his room abruptly one morning, and caught him *in querpo* in the middle of this

narrative up to his chin in hot water. I immediately concluded Peter must be suffering under a fit of the Hypo.—fancying himself a green turtle keeping up for a corporation feast, and that I was an Alderman come to inspect his condition. I expected every moment to see him dive to the bottom of his kraal. He has had a very long siege of it, but is now almost thoroughly recovered. He might have been well long since; but the little bellipotent knave cannot help toying occasionally with his bottle.

We had the magnaminous little Dr. Earle here some short time since; and determined to shew him the glories of our Island. To which end we embarked six of us in a coach, like so many jolly captains of vessels just landed, and took a day's journey round the Island. We dined at Manhattanville, and passed one of the merriest days I have spent for a long while. Indeed we have had three or four warm days work of late, that reminded me

very much of old times. The fourth of June we dined at Captain Philips and all got very much convived by wine & wassel, what between the wine and the song of Rule Britannia the captain got into a complete extacy—from thence we adjourned to Battins—and finished the evening by Jim's singing under the fair Julia's window, an old song travestied and most horribly out of tune.

A few days after Gen. Peter George Dallas of Phil[a] & myself dined on board the President with the officers in the ward room. We had a most convivial time, but sat so late that we could not go on shore that night—and the next day we were kept on board by a perfect storm of wind & rain until evening. I believe the ward room wont forget the rouse we gave it for some time to come. The frigate is in excellent order. The officers are a set of very fine gallant young fellows, and I have no doubt if a proper opportunity presents will

acquit themselves handsomely. But I look upon their fate as desperate, in a war with England.

The little Taylor has been here and passed some time since your departure. She is a delightful little creature, but alas, my dear Hal, she has not the *pewter*, as the sage Peter says. As to beauty, what is it "but a flower!" Handsome is that handsome has,—is the modern maxim. Therefore, little Taylor, "though thy little finger be armed in a thimble," yet will I set thee at defiance. In a word, she is like an ortolan, too rare and costly a dainty for a poor man to afford, but were I a nabob, 'fore George, ortolans should be my only food.

As I rode into town the other day, I had nearly ran down the fair Maria M——re. I immediately thought of your sudden admiration for her, which seemed to spring up rather late in the season, like strawberries in the fall —when every other swain's passion had died

a natural & lingering death. The fair Maria (for almighty truth will out) begins in my eyes to look, as that venerable Frenchman Todd would say—D——d stringy. She has been acting very much the part of the dog in the manger—she cannot enjoy her own chastity but seems unwilling to let anybody else do it. There certainly is a selfish pleasure in possessing a thing which is exclusively our own and which we see everybody around us coveting. And this may be the reason why we sometimes behold very beautiful women maintaining resolute possession of their charms—and what makes me think this must be the reason is that in proportion as these women grow old, and the world ceases to long after their treasures, they seem the most ready to part with them, until they at length seem ready to sacrifice them to the first bidder, and even to importune you to take them off their hands. This however I hope and believe will never be the case with the fair Maria, who, thanks to her

cool temperament can still pass on "in maiden meditation, fancy free."

I forgot to mention that I received your letter just after your arrival in Paris, and giving an account of your journey thither. I hope you may have found your other excursions in France equally agreeable. This war completely shuts up all my prospects of visiting Europe for some time to come; though I must confess I am so well pleased with home that I have no great desire at present to leave it. Travelling is a convenient alternative to resort to, when we begin to grow sated with objects around us, and require to be stimulated by novelty and variety. I always keep it in view as a kind of succedaneum for matrimony, and promise myself, in case I am not fortunate enough to get happily married to console myself by ranging a little about the world.

While I am in the country Jim garrisons my room in town and acts as guardian to the

book cases. Jim has intimated a wish to commence another work and I have agreed to join with him provided he will prepare a number of essays. I have commenced to do so myself, and unless he produces his share beforehand, I will dish mine up in some other form. I am in hope however of drawing some out of him.

The Patroon had very satisfactory intelligence from Uncle Mik sometime since about their property in the Mediterranean. It has relieved his mind exceedingly; and for a week after, he was one of the most spirited, gay hearted beaux in the City. I don't think he is so ardent in his devoirs to the divine Julia as formerly—I suspect she has an alabaster heart in that fair bosom—not that I think the Patroon ever made any serious attack upon it.

July 9th. In coming to town this morning I stopped at your father's. The old gentleman took me all over his territories to shew

me his subjects. Margaret has been rather unwell for a week past & looks pale; but is getting better. John too has taken cold and was indisposed, so that I did not see him. Your Mother, as you may suppose, is very anxious about the war, and wishes much that they would make peace so that you might return. The bear is in great spirits and is the wonder of the neighbouring swains. He does not seem however, to find favour in the eyes of the old man.

I have to conclude this letter abruptly in order to get it aboard the vessel. Your family all desired me to send as much love to you as my letter would carry.

Yours ever

W. I.

NEW YORK, JANUARY 2d 1813

New York, Jany 2^d 1813.

DEAR BREVOORT:—

The uncertainty of your movements and my own wanderings have prevented me from keeping up any thing like a regular correspondence with you. Had I thought you would have wintered in England I should have written you before this—but I will not spin out excuses.

I passed the early part of last Summer at a little retreat near Hell Gate, in the neighbourhood of the Gracies, Rhinelanders, &c—and spent two months quietly and delightfully there. In August I set off for the residence of the Highland Chieftain, whither I was accompanied by James Renwick. We passed a few days very pleasantly there, during which time Renwick took a variety of sketches of the surrounding scenery. The noble captain has completely failed in the matrimonial campaign—the lady shewing no symptoms of increase. I begin to despair of my coat.

From the captain's I prowled to the country seat of John R. L—— where I remained for a week, in complete fairy land. His seat is spacious and elegant with fine grounds around it—and the neighbourhood is very gay and hospitable. I dined twice at the Chancellor's and once at Mr. & Mrs. Montgomery's. Our own household was numerous and charming. In addition to the ladies of the family, there were Miss McEven & Miss Hayward. Dick McCall also, was there; who was languishing at the feet of the fair Angelica. He is engaged to be married to her. Had you but seen me, Happy rogue! up to my ears in "an ocean of peacocks' feathers"—or rather like a "Strawberry smothered in cream." The mode of living at the manor is exactly after my own heart. You have every variety of rural amusements within your reach, and are left to yourself to occupy your time as you please. We made several charming excursions, and you may suppose how delightful they were,

through such beautiful scenery, with such fine women to accompany you. They surpassed even our Sunday morning rambles among the groves on the Banks of the Hudson, when you and the divine Hen were so tender & sentimental, and you displayed your horsemanship so gallantly by leaping over a three barred gate.

After returning from my Hudson excursion I was sent on an expedition to the eastward to rescue our property from the hands of privateers men; who had carried in several vessels to eastern ports, having goods on board consigned to us. This was a busy & hurried jaunt, in which I had no time for amusement. After my return I was sent on a mission to Washington, to carry a petition from the importing merchants, praying for a remission of their Bond. This kept me for six weeks at Washington, from whence I had just returned, having happily succeeded in the object of my journey. There you have a brief sketch of my

life for the six or seven months past—which has been rather a more busy one than common.

I am now once more at our old quarters, and am at this moment writing at my usual corner of the table before the fire which honest John has just trimmed and replenished; would to heaven, my dear fellow, you were as formerly seated opposite to me. I cannot tell you my good Hal, how very much I miss you. I feel just as I did after the departure of my brother Peter, whose place you had in a manner grown into and supplied. The worthy Patroon also has departed for Spain, to reside at Cadiz, as an agent for LeRoy Bayard & Mr. Eben, and though I rejoice in his good prospects yet I cannot but deplore his departure. So we get scattered over this troubled world—this making of fortunes is the very bane of social life; but I trust when they are made, we shall all gather together again and pass the rest of our lives with one another.

I have undertaken to conduct the Select

Reviews, for the sake of pastime & employment of idle hours. I am handsomely paid & the work is no trouble.

When you return we must determine on some new mode of living, for I am heartily tired of this Boarding house system. Perhaps it will be better to get a handsome set of apartments & furnish them. But of this we will talk further when we meet. I was at your father's two or three days since. The old gentleman is highly tickled with the success of our Navy. He was so powerfully excited by the capture of the Macedonian, that he actually performed a journey to the Brothers, above Hellgate, where the frigates lay wind bound; and he brought away a piece of the Macedonian, which he seemed to treasure up with as much devotion as a pious Catholic does a piece of the true cross. Your Mother is well, and is looking forward with the utmost impatience for your return.

A few days since we had a superb dinner

given to the naval heroes, at which all the great eaters and drinkers of the City were present. It was the noblest entertainment of the kind I ever witnessed. On New Year's eve a grand Ball was likewise given where there was a vast display of great & little people. The Livingstons were there in all their glory. Little Rule Britannia made a gallant appearance at the head of a train of beauties; among whom were the divine Hen, who looked very inviting, and little Taylor, who looked still more so. Britannia was gorgeously dressed in a queer kind of hat of stiff purple & silver stuff, that had marvelously the appearance of copper, and made us suppose that she had procured the real Mambrino's helmet. Her dress was trimmed with what we simply mistook for scalps, and supposed it was in honour of the nation, but we blushed at our ignorance on discovering that it was a gorgeous trimming of marten tips—would that some eminent furrier had been there to wonder and admire.

The little Taylor was as amusing and fascinating as ever. She is an arrant little Tory and entertained me exceedingly with her sly jokes upon our navy. She looks uncommonly well, and is as plump as a partridge.

I am sorry to inform you that Mrs. Hoffman has been very alarmingly ill, and is still confined to her room though slowly recovering. Her complaint has symptoms of a pulmonary nature and gave great anxiety to her friends. I trust however that she will get the better of it. She bears her illness with all that gentleness & meekness that ever distinguish her, and appears more amiable & lovely under sickness than when in the full enjoyment of health and spirits.

Ann is passing the Winter at Mrs. Hoffman's. Charles has been unfortunate in business. I was always afraid that these huge ostentatious Book Establishments of Philadelphia would not answer. He has nearly settled with his creditors and is expected here in a few days.

They have lost their youngest child but the eldest is one of the most beautiful little creatures I ever saw. Ann is in good health & spirits and looks uncommonly well.

Our winter does not promise to be as gay even as the last; neither do I feel as much disposed to enter into dissipation. Mrs. Renwick's family is in mourning for the death of Dr. Kemp. Of course they do not go abroad so much, and their fire side is more quiet & pleasant. Young Benj. has gone to Charlestown with Mr. Gray, to get an insight into Southern commerce. James has been lecturing at Columbia College on natural philosophy, in place of Dr. Kemp. He has gained great credit and is reappointed to the situation. The professors speak very highly of him, & are particularly pleased because he asks no compensation.

The Gracies are likewise in mourning for the death of Mrs. Rogers, Mrs. Gracie's mother. Mr. Gracie has moved into his new

house and I find a very warm reception at the fire side. Their countryseat was one of my strongholds last summer, as I lived in its vicinity. It is a charming warm-hearted family, and the old gentleman has the soul of a prince. The fair Sally is soon to give her hand to James King.

Goodhue is engaged to Miss Clarkson, the sister to the pretty one. The engagement suddenly took place as they walked from church on Christmas day, and report says the action was shorter than any of our naval victories, for the lady struck on the first Broadside.

This war has completely changed the face of things here. You would scarcely recognize our old peaceful city. Nothing is talked of but armies, navies, Battles &c. Men who had loitered about, the hangers on and incumbrances of society, have all at once risen to importance and been the only useful men of the day.

Had not the miserable accounts from fron-

tiers dampened in some manner the public zeal, I believe half of our young men would have been military mad. As it is, if this war continues & a regular be raised instead of depending on volunteers & militia, I believe we shall have the Commissions sought after with avidity, by young gentlemen of education and good breeding, and our army will be infinitely more respectable and infinitely more successful.

I hope this letter may find you on the eve of your departure for this country. I do long most earnestly to see you here again. I suppose my brother will remain longer in Europe, and much as I wish to see him home once more, I feel content that he should stay until he can return with money in both pockets and the whole of us be able to live after our own hearts for the rest of our lives.

God bless you my dear fellow.

Yours ever

W. I.

NEW YORK, SEPTEMBER 9th 1814

N York, Sept. 9th 1814.

DEAR BREVOORT:—

I have nothing now to tell you and write in great haste. Judge Van Ness desires me to inform you, that should there be any difficulty in your way, which his assistance would be important in removing, to write him word and he will do everything in his power to assist you, and even come up to Vermont if necessary. He appears to be very sincerely interested for your success. I enclose you a letter recd by the Saratoga; which I presume is for L'Herbette. The household are all well.

God bless & prosper you.

Your friend

W. I.

ALBANY, SEPTEMBER 26th 1814

Albany, Sept. 26th 1814.

DEAR BREVOORT:—

I have just arrived here in the Suite of the Governor. How long I shall remain here I know not, perhaps a week or more; though, if affairs remain tranquil at New York, I shall endeavor to be sent with some business to one or other of the armies on the lines.

The Iron Greys go on very well. They are attached to a regiment commanded by Lt. Col. Cadwallader D. Colden, and will be encamped in a few days in the vicinity of Greenwich. I have been incessantly occupied since I saw you, by the duties of my station; and feel more pleased than ever with it. I am very anxious to hear how matters go with you. I think there is no prospect of immediate peace and am of opinion, that should the British wait the results of the present campaign, they will rather be disposed to continue hostilities; to wipe out the stains of late defeats. This Scourging Campaign has on

the whole been thus far a degrading one to them & the Victory on Champlain will be a pill not easily swallowed. I wish you would treasure up all the striking particulars you may hear concerning it, as I must give McDonough a dash.

In great haste

Yours truly

W. I.

P.S. The Commercial world is aghast at New York in consequence of recent failures. Minturn & Champlin, Post & Minturn, Robert Bowne & Thos Eddy have gone by the board & others are tottering.

New York, Oct. 16th 1814.

DEAR BREVOORT:—

I returned here some days since, after having made a rough but interesting journey to Sacketts Harbour. Military business goes on steadily here, and the progress that the militia have made is surprising. The Iron Greys have become very expert with their aims and correct in their evolutions; you will find yourself a complete Johnny Raw among them. By the bye, they are very much at a loss to conceive what you are about, & do not half like your long absence. The Gallant Sam has fairly changed front, and instead of laying siege to Douglas Castle has charged sword in hand and carried little Cooper's intrenchments. In plain English, he has abandoned the Lady of the Bleeding Heart and has paid his addresses to Alice Ann Cooper & what is more, they *are actually engaged.* I would scarce credit the report; until I had it confirmed from his own mouth. Your old

flame Maria Haight takes vast credit on herself for having been very potent in promoting the match: in honest secrecy the old puss thought at first Sam was in love with herself. He used to ask her to ride out to Coldens &c &c. She affected great confusion when twittered about him; a little time served to show her the mistake, and I must do her the justice to say, she turned it off very cleverly, and made a very faithful confidant. Sam & the company agree extremely well & matters go on very smoothly.

The folks here are in the alarm again; expecting an attack. You will have heard before this of the force with which Lord Hill is coming out, and it is certain the intention of his expedition was an attack on this place. Circumstances may induce him to alter it; but I think it probable we shall have our mettle tried. I am impatient to hear of your having effected your business and that you are on your route homewards. You will of

course be on the look out, and learn what is the situation of affairs; should we be in immediate danger of attack, this will not be the place to bring goods, as business will be at a stand.

We had letters recently from the doctor, by the John Adams. He was then in Amsterdam, & had been to Paris, Ghent &c. He was about to return to Ghent & was waiting the result of our negociations, to determine his mercantile proceedings. He had become acquainted with the commissioners and I make no doubt was on very good terms with them. He proposed afterwards to rejoin the Brummagen Family.

You will see by the terms demanded by England, that there is no chance for a speedy peace—goods must therefore sell well. Every body here & I trust throughout the country is indignant at the insulting proposition of the enemy & but one spirit seems to animate all ranks & parties, a determination to bend

every effort to the promotion of a vigorous war.

The household at Mrs. Bradishes continues the same as usual. March is aide to Little Morton, and has swelled so much on the occasion, that he can hardly keep from busting his Breeches. Cruger is aide to Lewis, who has a very formidable staff. Hamilton, Little Lewis, Big Dom. Lynch, Montgomery Livingston, and Cruger—what a sage Council of War they could hold! I expect however, that Lewis will shortly be removed from the command of this post—and when the kite falls the bobs in the tail must follow.

Yours truly,

W. I.

SANDY HOOK, MAY 25th 1815

Sandy Hook, May 25th 1815.

DEAR BREVOORT:—

I was extremely sorry to leave New York, without taking you by the hand. Unsettled and almost joyless as has been my life for some time past, yet when I came to the last moment of parting from home, I confess it wrung my heart. But all is for the best and I am satisfied that a little absence will be greatly to my advantage.

I should have liked to have taken farewell of my worthy housemates, of whom I shall retain a warm remembrance, and shall toast their memories whenever I can get a taste of the real beverage. Remember me to Mrs. Bradish and Miss Claypoole,—the unexpected hurry of my departure prevented my seeing them, in fact I was too much hurried and worried at the moment to think of any thing.

Give my farewell to William Kemble. I shall write to you from England, and beg you to let me hear from you whenever you have

a scribbling fit & leisure moment to spare to an old and constant friend.

God bless you

W. I.

Tell Lee I shall open his dispatches in the morning; in the meantime I give him my hearty good wishes, & beg him to bid the L——s adieu for me. I should have called there again had the vessel not sailed so abruptly.

The wind is springing up from the west and I trust we shall clear at sea before morning. The Ship gives much satisfaction & I am much pleased with my fellow passengers.

Birmingham, July 5th 1815.

DEAR BREVOORT:—

You will see by the date of this letter, that I am safely housed under the hospitable roof of the Baron. I found him & the Baroness and all the Young Van Tromps in excellent health & spirits and most delightfully situated in the vicinity of the town. You would really be charmed with their establishment. My sister has altered very much since she left America; particularly within the last year. Instead of an extremely slender figure, she is now plump and healthful in her appearance, and far handsomer than ever she was. This England is certainly a most favourable country to the preservation of youth & youthful looks. I hope if I stay here a while I shall return quite a Younker again. My Brother Peter also seems quite unaltered though seven years have passed away since our parting—which you know is a fearful lapse of time to Gentlemen "of a certain age." At present, poor

fellow, he is afflicted with a violent attack of the Erysipelas, which, though yielding to strict regimen and prescriptions confines him strictly to the house. I passed a week with him in Liverpool and find him the same identical being he was in America. I am in hopes he will be sufficiently well and disengaged in business to come up here soon, and to take some little excursions about the country; which would be of great service to him after having been for months worn down by business, anxiety, & indisposition.

I saw your Friend Richards at Liverpool & dined with him. He inquired about you & your affairs with much friendly interest. He has been a staunch and valuable friend to both Van Wart & Peter, and behaved himself in the handsomest manner. He is very much grieved at present at the utter overthrow of poor Boney, whose cause and character he vindicates with great gallantry.

I ought to have mentioned before, that my

voyage, though a wintry one as to weather, was extremely pleasant from good humour and good reading that prevailed from my fellow passengers. I do not believe that the same number of passengers were ever mewed up together for thirty days in dirty cabins and with equal deficiency of comforts that maintained more and unvarying harmony and good will for each other. I was particularly pleased with the British officers. Sir William Williams is a cheerful, good hearted well bred gentleman, with fine animal spirits and great urbanity. Heckey is one of the best tempered, honest hearted fellows alive, but Major Hancock, I found one of the most original, entertaining and interesting characters that I have met with for a long time. A scholar, a man of reading & observation and of great humour and excentricity. I trust I shall meet with some of these gentlemen again at London, or in the course of my rambles in England.

BIRMINGHAM, JULY 5th 1815

I found honest Jack Wilkes at Birmingham. He was on the hunt for me on the night of my arrival, in company with Van Wart but I got to the house without meeting them. I regretted it, as I am told Jack was a little elevated, having dined out & got mellow on *Gooseberry* wine! We roasted him soundly for it the next day when he dined at Van Warts. He is gone to Liverpool but I hope to see him here soon again. I am happy to find that I shall be likely to meet his sister in London. I am in daily expectation of James Renwick's arrival here on his way to Liverpool where he is to be the day after tomorrow. I found from Mr. Davidson, what were his movements, & wrote to him to London to stop here on his way down, that we might connect future campaigning.

I am delighted with England. The country is enchanting and I have experienced as yet nothing but kindness and civility. I think it probable I shall go up to London for a few

days before Parliament rises & the theatres close; after which I shall return to this place & from hence make excursions throughout the country.

I have forborn making comments on the wonderful events that are taking place in the political world. They are too vast and astonishing to be grasped in the narrow compass of a familiar letter—and indeed as yet I can do nothing but look on in stupid amazement—wondering with vacant conjecture—"what will take place next?" I am determined however, to get a near view of the actors in this great Drama.

Just before I left N. York, Lee put in my hand a note to be read when I should be out to sea. I read it according to the directions and found it to be a contradiction of the story which he told us about his declaration & engagement to Miss S. L—— He said the story was merely got up to prevent yourself, D. Sampayo and me from quizzing him about

her. A very paltry excuse, especially, as I had some time ceased to speak to him about her. He said his fabrication was known but to us three & if we said no more about it, the thing would go no further. He requested me to write to him from Europe.—*We do no such thing.* I have not got over the disgust occasioned by the singular note and still more strange fabrication. I consider his conduct, as totally irreconcilable to my ideas of honourable & delicate principle. I consider a man who can indulge in such an elaborate and systematic falsification of his word, involving too the character & interests of others, particularly of such a being as S. L——as too dangerous a man to be admitted freely & confidentially into domestic circles. I must say there was something about his pretended disclosure at which my feelings revolted. I felt pained at the prospect of a union so dissimilar and discordant—and I even felt that delicate respect & admiration which I had long entertained for

Miss L—— impaired and almost prostrated at the idea of her having so suddenly and strangely imbibed an attachment which argued a coarse and gross taste, courted as she has been by glaring attentions and hyperbolical flattery. You will recollect our conversation on this subject. I do not know but that this feeling of transient disgust made me less particular in seeking a particular farewell from the ladies of the Palace than I should otherwise have been. I beg when you see them you will assure them of my unaltered friendship and most heartfelt good wishes. They have made many hours & days of my life pass happily and I shall always think of them with the most delightful recollections. I find Peter sent out a quantity of fashionable music to me, which was chosen by little Ellen Johnson, who has become a Mistress of the art. I intended it for the Miss L——s and hope it has been delivered.

I cannot tell you how happy I feel at find-

ing myself embosomed in my sister's charming little family. I am like another being from what I was in that listless period of existence that preceded my departure from America. It seems as if my whole nature had changed—a thousand kind feelings and affections that had lain torpid, are aroused within me—my very blood seems to flow more warm and sprightly. Her children surpass my expectations. The boys are noble little fellows—full of innocent gaiety, buxom health and eternal good humour. My little god daughter Matilda is a sweet playful child, and even little Marianne, though a mere mite of mortality, is full of pleasantness & good spirits. Every thing around me too, is so exactly to my taste. The House, the grounds, the Household establishment, the mode of living; never before did I find myself more completely at home. I wish to heavens you were here to enjoy all this with me—you would be most heartily welcomed.

I found on my arrival at Liverpool that Charles Kemble & his wife were acting there. I called on them and renewed our acquaintance. Kemble tells me that in consequence of his being about on the continent he did not get the letters from America until long after they were written. The terms offered by Mr. Cooper were not such as to tempt them across the Atlantic, as they could make as much by travelling among the provincial Theatres of England. Besides they have a large & encreasing family which would be of itself a detriment. Kemble however talks as if he should like to make an excursion to America himself for a year & leave Mrs. K. & the family in England. Such I think would be his best plan as Mrs. K., though an actress of undoubted talents, has grown almost too large for many of the characters she plays—particularly for the eyes of American audiences, who you know are accustomed to the more delicate figures of our American ladies.

I should think a liberal offer might tempt Kemble to pay America a visit.

Give my kindest remembrances to Mrs. Bradish, Miss Bradish, Miss Claypoole and all the household, especially my worthy friend Johnson, whose health I hope to drink in the true Beverage in his own brave country before long.

When you see Mrs. Renwick remember me heartily to her and her family & tell her I shall keep a sharp look out upon that wild youth Jamie, who I fear is playing what Launce calls "the prodigious Son" at London.

Remember me affectionately also to my good friends the Hoffmans, and let me know how they all do and whether Charles Nicholas continues in public service. I shall write to you again soon & hope to receive some lines from you in return.

Your friend

W. I.

Liverpool, August 19th 1815.

MY DEAR BREVOORT:—

I cannot tell how much I have been gratified by your long letter of the 8th July. I shall endeavour to repay it, when I have more leisure, by a letter of more length if not more value, than I am able to write at present. I have just returned from a delightful tour in Wales with Renwick, of which I have no time to furnish particulars. Our route was from Birmingham to the Leasowes, Hagley, Worcester, Tewkesbury, Cheltenham, Gloucester, Bath, Bristol, Chepstow, Tintern, Monmouth, Hereford, Leominster, Ludlow, Shrewsbury, Ellsmere, Langothen, Conway, Caernarvon, Bethgellert Llanrwst, Ruthin, Denbigh, Chester, Liverpool. As you know the country, you may judge what a charming tour it has been. As we had no letters to the Cloughs I had not an opportunity of seeing your friend the little Apothecary, who had such a passion for great Lakes and mighty

rivers; I had forgotten in fact whether he lived in Denbigh or one of the neighbouring villages. I found Renwick an excellent travelling companion, and, from his uncommon memory, an exceeding good book of reference, so as to save me a vast deal of trouble in consulting my travelling books. The professor is now in Liverpool & will remain here until Smedburg sails, when he intends paying Scotland a visit.

My Brother is still an invalid, but recovering from the flames of St. Anthony, in which he has been almost consumed. He has been troubled for a few days past with rheumatic pains in one of his legs. I hope however that he will soon be well enough to make an excursion to Birmingham & that a visit to some watering place will completely restore him.

About the subject of Lee's conduct, I gave you my opinion in a former letter and am happy to find it accords so perfectly with your own. Indeed I was sure from your correct-

ness of mind, you could not but revolt from such a gross unnecessary imposition, set on elaborate tissue of fabrication; above all, such an unwarrantable abuse of a lady's name, whose character & conduct would awe any being of the most ordinary delicacy into scrupulous respect. Upon my soul, the more I think of it, the more I am surprised at the hardihood of Lee in daring to treat with such licentious tongue, the name of such a pure and delicate creature as S—— L. But I need not dwell on this subject as I know you feel exactly as I do, and I think the manner in which you treated Lee exactly right. You may be assured I shall never mention the matter to any other being but yourself—though, as Dennis was in some measure in Lee's wide spread confidence I question whether he has not proclaimed it on the house tops.

I received a very good, that is to say a very characteristic Letter yesterday from that

worthy little Tar, Jack Nicholson, dated 7 July on Board the Flambeau off Algiers, & giving a brief account of our affairs with Algiers. He mentions that "they fell in with & captured the Admiral's ship and *killed him.*" As this is all that Jack's brevity will allow him to say on the subject I should be at a loss to know whether they killed the admiral *before* or *after* his capture. The well known humanity of our tars however, induces me to the former conclusion. He informs me that he had written to the Livingstons & sent them *Otto of Roses, &c.*

This triumph will completely fix Decatur's Reputation—he may now repose on his Laurels & have wherewithal to solace himself under their shade. Give my hearty congratulations to Mrs. Decatur, & tell her that now I am willing she shall have the Commodore to herself, and with all her comfort & happiness with him.—A gallanter fellow never stepped a quarter deck—God bless him.

The Wiggins family & Madame Bonaparte passed thro here while I was in Wales. I understand that they are at Cheltenham, but it is probable they will soon pass over to the continent, as the ladies are very anxious to visit Paris, though Wiggins wishes to stop a while in England. I think the poor man has his hands full with such a bevy of beautiful women under his charge, and all doubtless bent on pleasure and admiration.

Scott & Mercer likewise passed thro' here while I was abroad. What think you of Poor Boney in America—his fallen fortunes have awakened sympathy even in England. For my part I feel a kindness for him in his distresses, & think the cabinet here have acted with much littleness in their treatment of him.

I recd a letter from Colden declaring the fallacy of his project. I had long before lost all faith in it & had taken no steps concerning it, in this country.

I beg you will remember me with great

regard to Mrs. & Miss Bradish & Miss Claypoole. I sent a No. of Byron's Hebrew Melodies to Miss B—— by Mr. Clay which I hope she received.

Give my hearty recollections to those two worthies Walker and Johnson and my good wishes to all the household—I shall write you more particularly soon.

Yours ever

W. I.

P.S. Should you in the course of your journeyings see my fair friend Mrs. Campbell of Philadelphia give her my sincere regards. If you visit Philadelphia I am sure their home will be one of your favorite resorts.

I shall attend to your request concerning Old Books, and shall peep into all the little stalls that I meet with.

Liverpool, August 23d 1815.

DEAR BREVOORT:—

I wrote you a hasty letter a few days since which you will receive per the Genl Hamilton. —Since then I have recd your letter by the Pacific, and have again to express my sense of this attention. I had purposed writing you a long & particular letter; but have been so much engaged in scribbling to various persons, and in attending a little to our business here, on account of Peter's indisposition, that I have no time to write leisurely & fully.

I am very glad to hear that you are likely to make an arrangement with the N. W. Co. on advantageous terms. I am satisfied that in your hands it will turn to profitable account, though I think with you that nothing but a prospect of very considerable & certain gain should tempt you in any wise to link your fortunes with others, or place your independence of life & action in any wise in their control.

I trust your operations on this side of the water will be successful, though you made rather a bad outset in remitting specie. Our business I trust will be very *good*—it certainly will be very *great*, this year, and will give us credit, if not profit. Not withstanding that Peter has been an invalid, and confined to the house almost continually since the Treaty of Ghent, yet he has managed to get through an immensity of business. He is slowly getting over his complaint; but is very much afflicted at present with the rheumatism. He has very comfortable & handsome apartments in Bold St. where I reside at present with him. Thomas, that mirror of silent & discreet domestics, still acts as his Squire; and retains the same immovable solemnity of muscle that marked his countenance when you were here.

I do not know whether I mentioned to you my having become acquainted with Little Booth, during my short visit to London. I visited her several times and was very much

charmed with her. She frequently mentioned you with great regard. Little Fidel is still in full fire & vigour—and one of the most tyrannical little villains that ever existed. He ramps & roars & rages at his little mistress with such tremendous violence that I was more than ever afraid that he would swallow her alive.

While at London I made an excursion to Sydenham to visit Mr. Campbell—unfortunately he was not at home. I spent an hour in conversation with Mrs. Campbell—who is a most engaging & interesting woman. Campbell was still engaged in getting his critical work through the press—and as he is a rigid censor of his own works—correcting is as laborious as composition to him. He alters & amends until the last moment. I am in hopes when he has this work off his hands, he will attempt another poem. Mrs. C gave me some anecdotes of Scott—but none so remarkable as to dwell in my memory. He has lost much by the failure of the Ballan-

tynes, but is as merry & unconcerned to all appearance as ever—one of the happiest fellows that ever wrote poetry. I find it is very much doubted whether he is the Author of Waverly & Guy Mannering—Brown, one of the publishers, positively says he is not. It is reported that another novel will soon make its appearance from the same hand, called the Antiquarian.

I was agreeably surprised the other day by the arrival of long Peter Ogden—the *hero* ot New Orleans (to use an American expression). He is likely to be a good deal in Liverpool and will have lodgings in our neighborhood. Lawrence and his wife (late Fanny Ogden) have likewise arrived. I saw them just after their landing. They have had a remarkably fine voyage. This place swarms with Americans—you never saw a more motley race of beings—some seem as if just from the woods, and yet stalk about the streets & public places with all the easy *nonchalance* that they would

about their own villages. Nothing can surpass the dauntless independence of all form, ceremony, fashion or regulation of a downright, unsophisticated American. Since the war too, particularly, one lad seems to think they are "salt of the earth," and the legitimate lords of creation. It would delight you to see some of them playing Indians when surrounded by the wonders & improvements of the old world. It is impossible to match these fellows with anything on this side of the water. Let an Englishman talk of the Battle of Waterloo & they will immediately bring New Orleans & Plattsburgh. A thorough bred, thoroughly appointed soldier, is nothing to a Kentucky Rifleman—as to British Lakes & rivers they are completely drowned in Lake Superior & the Mississippi. The Welsh Mountains are mole hills to the Alleghany—and as to all mechanical improvements they are totally eclipsed & annihilated by an American Steam Boat.

I have had no letter from Thomas since I have been in England—which rather surprises me, knowing his great propensity to write even when he has nothing to say. How does the magazine come on? I shall continue to find out periodical works for it until I can make some arrangement in London to take the troublesome duty off our hands.

I should like to see the National Intelligencer, now, that Jim is writing for it. These late triumphs on the continent will be sore blows to Jim's plans—they will materially delay the great object of his life—the overthrow of the British Empire. His grand coadjutor Poor Boney has at length left the coast—for St. Helena.

I must say I think the Cabinet has acted with littleness toward him. In spite of all his misdeeds he is a noble fellow,—and I am confident will eclipse in the eyes of Posterity, all the crowned wiseacres that have crushed him by their overwhelming confederacy.

If any thing could place the Prince Regent in a more ridiculous light, it is Bonaparte suing for his magnanimous protection.—Every compliment paid to this bloated sensualist, this inflation of sack & sugar, turns to the keenest sarcasm—and nothing shows more completely the caprices of fortune and how truly she delights in reversing the relative situations of persons & baffling the flights of intellect & enterprizes—than that, of all the monarchs of Europe, *Bonaparte* should be brought to the feet of the *Prince Regent.*

"An eagle towering in his pride of place
Was by a mousing owl hawked at & killed."

In mentioning Mrs. Campbell I ought to have told you that she spoke very particularly and very kindly of you. You were also inquired after by various good people of Birmingham, particularly the Binghams, where Renwick & myself dined. You may recollect the family. The old Gentleman is a hearty good humoured, right down John Bull,

has very pretty & amiable daughters, one of them a little lame & a charming woman for a wife. It is a family where Peter is fond of visiting. During the short stays I have made at Birmingham I have found several very agreeable acquaintances among the neighbours.

My only acquaintances as yet in this place are the families of Mr. Richard & Mr. Woolsey. Mr. Richards is at present out of town. Mrs. Woolsey you must certainly recollect. She is a perfect lady and a most amiable interesting woman—she likewise mentioned you in very flattering terms.

Remember me to Mrs. Bradishes family & household.

Peter Ogden tells me that my old friend & quondam Vassal William served him as *Valet de place* during his residence in N York. The good old man must feel much comfort in the restoration of the Bourbons.

Yours ever

W. I.

P.S. If you can at any time find me pamphlets, newspapers &c I should be very glad to see them—you may leave them at our counting room to be forwarded by *private hand*. By a regulation of the last parliament all letters &c arriving from abroad are subject to full postage—and from a blunder in the Act, Newspapers &c are subject to equal postage with letters, so that a parcel of Newspapers will come to perhaps a couple of Guineas. This prevents their being taken out of the post office & completely balks us in the reception of news in that way. It is expected that a provision will be made when parliament meets permitting them to be delivered with light postage—until then however the only mode of getting them to us is privately, by the hands of Captains or passengers.

LIVERPOOL, SEPTEMBER 8th 1815

Liverpool, Sept. 8th 1815.

DEAR BREVOORT:—

I have just returned from accompanying Peter as far as Manchester, on his way to Harrowgate. He bore his journey so far very well, and yesterday I saw him off from Manchester, very comfortably stowed away in a Chaise, loaded with as many conveniences as the "Happy Man" whom you encountered of yore in Wales, and attended by his faithful, discreet, and taciturn man, Thomas—or as we more correctly call him "Solemn Silence." I trust the waters of Harrowgate will completely restore both skin & bone, which is nearly all that remains of him. I shall remain here as long as the fall business requires my presence, and then join him at Harrowgate.

I have not heard any thing of Conger since I saw him in London, except when in Bath, on my way to Wales. He had promised to meet me in Bath and accompany Renwick and myself on our Welsh Tour, but on inquir-

ing for him in that city I heard that he was at some watering place & would not return in some days. I am in hopes of soon seeing Charles King in Liverpool to await the arrival of his family. I saw much of him while in London and, as you may suppose, found him a most desirable companion, in the Metropolis. Charles is exactly what an American should be abroad—frank, manly & unaffected in his habits & manners, liberal & independent in his opinions, generous & unprejudiced in his sentiments towards other nations, but most loyally attached to his own.

Peter received a letter some few days since, from Colin Robertson, dated on the Banks of the Superior.—He was to return by the way of Hudson Bay. He mentions having heard of your intention of doing business with the N W—but hoped that it is only Commission business—as he thought that Compy on the decline. He seems very sanguine as to the business in which he is engaged.

LIVERPOOL, SEPTEMBER 8th 1815

I have not heard any thing of Madame Bonaparte since her arrival in this country, except that the newspapers mention her being at Cheltenham. There are so many huge stars and comets thrown out of their orbits & whirling about the world at present, that a little star, like Madm B. attracts but slight attention, even though she draws after her so sparkling a tail as the Wiggins family.

I regret very much that I was not in Liverpool when she arrived. I should have liked to have congratulated the little lady on the prospect of a speedy consummation of the great wish of her heart, a visit to Paris—and I should have delighted to bask in the sweet smiles of Mrs. W. and her charming sister.

We were very uneasy some few days since from news from the family of the Van Tromps that little Irving had received a violent contusion in the head by a fall from a Pony—he however is now perfectly recovered, having inherited a solid Dutch head from his father.

LIVERPOOL, SEPTEMBER 8th 1815

By mistake one of our clerks has just put a small parcel of music, for Miss Bradish, in the letter bag of the Pacific—I had intended to have sent it by private hand. They are merely a few fashionable songs. I can't say much as to the selection. Liverpool is not the best place to get new music, & these were chosen by another hand. Give my regards to Mrs. Bradish & her daughter—and my hearty remembrances to Johnson Walker & all the household.

In great haste,

Yours sincerely

W. I.

LIVERPOOL, SEPTEMBER 26th 1815

Liverpool, Sept. 26th 1815.

MY DEAR BREVOORT:—

I have at this moment so many things to attend to and letters to write, and the ship by which I send this is so immediately on the wing, that I have barely time to scrawl a few lines. I cannot lose a moment, however, in returning you a thousand thanks for your delightful letters by the Minerva Smyth. They were exactly such as a man wishes, when away from home; and if you knew how much they gratified me, I am sure you would think the trouble of them compensated a hundred fold.

The Minerva Smyth arrived the night before last. Yesterday morning I heard of her being in the river, and to my utter astonishment, that the worthy Governor was on board. I was ready to exclaim, "Stands Scotland where it did?" for it really seemed as if one of the pillars of the earth had quit its base to take a ramble. The world is surely topsy-turvy

and its inhabitants all shaken out of place. Emperors and kings, statesmen and philosophers, Bonaparte, Alexander, Johnson, and the Wiggins's, all strolling about the face of the earth.

No sooner did I hear of the interesting group that had come out in the Minerva Smyth, than, with my usual excitement, which is apt to put me in a fever, and make me overshoot my mark, I got a boat and set off for the ship, which lay about three miles off. The weather was boisterous—the Mersey rough. I got well ducked; and, when I arrived on board, had the satisfaction to hear that my eagerness had, as usual, led me upon a wild-goose chase, and that, had I made the least inquiry, I should have found the passengers had all landed early in the morning. Away then I paddled across the river; and the tide being contrary, was landed at the upper part of Liverpool; had to trudge two miles through dirty lanes and alleys; was two or

three times entangled among the docks, and baulked by drawbridges thrown open, so that it was afternoon before I got to the Liverpool Arms, where I found the party all comfortably housed.

I cannot tell you how rejoiced I was to take the worthy Governor by the hand and to find myself in the delightful little circle which brought New York so completely home to my recollection and feelings. Mrs. King has made an excellent sailor—and the children are in fine health and spirits. Little Eliza is as wild as an Indian and delighted with everything around her. Little Hatty is a beautiful creature and the Boy a noble animal! I never saw a nobler child. I dined with them and passed four hours most happily in talking over past scenes and distant friends.

Charles King has not arrived yet, but I expect he will be here to-morrow or next day. Mrs. King is in better health than when I left New York and is in excellent spirits. The

children have absolutely astonished the people at the hotel. You know the great decorum of the English and the system of quiet and reserve by which their children are brought to behave like little men and women—whereas the little Kings, who are full of spirits and health, are just as noisy and frolicksome as if out at Hellgate—and racket about the hotel just as they would at Papa Gracie's in State St. I was infinitely amused with their rantipole gambols—the little creatures are like birds let loose from a cage. Eliza King showed me, with great pride, a certificate of the good behaviour of herself and Hatty, during the voyage, signed by the passengers.

Peter is at Harrowgate, taking the waters—he writes that he finds himself much better—though still troubled with the rheumatism. I am remaining in Liverpool to finish our fall business and get the establishment here in perfect order—after which I shall join Peter.

I will write you more particularly when I

have a moment's time. Remember me to all the household and to your family.

Yours truly

W. I.

I mentioned in a previous letter that little Booth had been ill at Hertford during a Dramatic Tour. She is perfectly recovered and performs in London. She was so dangerously ill that at one time she was given over by the Physicians.

I have become acquainted with the Graemes who speak of you with great kindness. I shall give you further account of them when I write particularly. I am very much pleased with them.

I have met them with a Mrs. Donovan, a very young and beautiful woman. She looks something like Mrs. Murphy—do you recollect her? By the way I am glad to hear that Mrs. Murphy is over now in New York—remember me to her with great regard. I hope she retains her beauty.

LIVERPOOL, OCTOBER 17th 1815

Liverpool, Oct. 17th 1815.

DEAR BREVOORT:—

I write merely to tell you that you must not think me negligent in my correspondence. I will most certainly write to you amply when I have time; but for several weeks past I have been more *really* busy than I ever was in my life. As I am a complete novice in business it of course takes up my whole time and completely occupies my mind, so that at present I am as dull commonplaced a fellow as ever figured upon Change. When I once more emerge from the mud of Liverpool, and shake off the sordid cares of the Counting House, you shall hear from me.

Indeed the present life I lead is utterly destitute of anecdote, or anything that could furnish interest or embellishment to a letter— & my imagination is too much jaded by pounds shillings and pence to be able to invent facts or adorn realities.

By my last letter from Peter I learn that he

was about to leave Harrowgate & limp toward Birmingham. His health was generally better, but his inveterate rheumatic complaint still torments him and renders him so much a cripple that he can scarcely walk about the room.

I am in hope of being able to visit the good folks at Birmingham in a little while & shall feel right glad to turn my back upon Liverpool for a season. I have been too much occupied here to think much of society or amusement, otherwise I should have found the place rather *triste*. As I did not expect to pass any time in Liverpool, I brought out no letters for the place & of course know scarce any one except those with whom I have dealings in business. I have experienced very hospitable treatment from Mr. Woolsey, Davidson & Macgregor & find honest Richards' house quite a home. But there is a great lack of companions of my own taste and turn.

I have become very well acquainted with the Graemes and am very much pleased with

them—Lawrence Graeme has lately returned home on furlough. I am sorry he was not able to pass through N York on his return from Canada—he appears to be a very fine young man. Miss Grace is as blooming as Hebe. She is very much given to write poetry, not withstanding the severe criticisms of the Old Colonel, who like honest Burchell, cries fudge! at the end of every stanza.

Renwick is still in Scotland figuring amongst the Caledonian Hunts. I have not had a letter from him since his departure for the North, but hear of him occasionally through Davidson. I expect he has mounted a pair of Leather Breeches and is playing off the knowing one of the turf.

I have not heard anything of little Madame Bonaparte for sometime. My last accounts mentioned her as being still at Cheltenham enjoying herself greatly. The Wiggins were likewise there, honest Wiggins confined to his room by the rheumatism.

Johnson is still in Liverpool. I occasionally meet him at Dinner & on Change—and we talk over old times and the many illustrious events that happened under his merciful & glorious government.

I hope you will accept this as *an apology* for a letter. I am writing in real hurry—give my affectionate remembrances to Mrs. & Miss Bradish & Miss Claypoole if still with you & my hearty regards to the household.

Your friend

W. I.

Liverpool, Nov. 2d 1815.

DEAR BREVOORT:—

Mr. Richards put in my hands some few days since a letter from you, ordering a number of Books. As honest Richards seldom meddles with any books beyond his counting house library he handed the order to me requesting I would attend to it.

I have put it in the hands of Mr. Muncaster, a Bookseller of this place, who will gather together the works, and get as many of them as possible in sheets, that they may be bound up here, according to my directions. He has promised to put them at as favorable terms as they could be procured from any of the trade. He is the Bookseller from whom Peter has been in the habit of procuring all the periodical and other publications sent out to me for two or three years past, and is very fair and reasonable in his dealings. As Murray is not the publisher of the greater part of the works, he would not be able to af-

ford them cheaper than Mr. Muncaster. They shall be forwarded to you as soon as possible.

I wish I had anything interesting or agreeable to tell you, but I have been for some time past completely occupied in the concerns of our Liverpool establishment, and as I am a novice in business, they have engrossed my whole attention and render me good for nothing else. Peter is in Birmingham where I hope to join him next week, and have a little relaxation from my labours. I anticipate much gratification from the assemblage of our family forces in the redoubtable castle of the Van Tromps.

I was introduced a day or two since to Mrs. Wood, lately returned from Scotland, one of the ladies of New Abbey, where you used to figure during your Scottish campaign. She appears to be a very frank, pleasant woman and I have no doubt I shall be still more pleased on further acquaintance.

The Graeme and his clan are all well. The

fair Grace continues most desperately poetical, in spite of the criticisms of the old Colonel and the rest of the family, who treat her poor Muse in the most unfeeling manner. I have unfortunately got entangled in an obstinate critical warfare with her on a passage in one of her poems, where she compares the eye of her hero to a sparkling gem *set in a pearly sea*. To this I objected most stoutly, inasmuch as I have never heard of anything set in the sea except the sun. I would allow her hero a *pearly tear*, or what was more probably the case, a *drop* in his eye, or if she pleased a *cataract*, but as to having a sea in his eye, it was altogether inadmissible—unless he was some aspiring dignitary of the Church.

The Colonel's son George is home on furlough. He was wounded in the Battle of Waterloo—he is a fine animated handsome little fellow and extremely agreeable. The Colonel's little family group is unconsciously pleasing and interesting.

LIVERPOOL, NOVEMBER 2d 1815

Andrew Hamilton arrived here about a fortnight since and has gone up to London, from whence, when regularly equipped and fitted out he was to go to Cheltenham where Mrs. O'Berne has been passing the fashionable season. I have heard nothing of Mad. Bonaparte excepting that she was fashionable at Cheltenham and had taken lodgings separate from the Wiggins's. Johnson is still in Liverpool and will remain here some time longer. Peter Ogden is likewise here and waxing very fat. James Renwick is playing the roaring blade in Scotland. I am told by good authority that he has fleeced all the old ladies in Dumfries at cards—and has got the character among them of a perfect leg.

Yours ever

W. I.

BIRMINGHAM, DECEMBER 28th 1815

Birmingham, Dec. 28th 1815.

DEAR BREVOORT:—

It is a long while since I have heard from you, and since your last, we have been very uneasy in consequence of hearing of your being dangerously ill. Subsequent accounts, however, have again put you on your legs and relieved us from our anxiety. I have lately been on a short visit to London; merely to see sights and visit public places. Our worthy friend, Johnson, and his brother arrived in town while I was there, and we were frequently together. The Governor enjoyed the amusements of London with high zest, and like myself, was a great frequenter of the theatres —particularly when Miss O'Nealle performed. We both agreed that were you in England you would infallibly fall in love with this "divine perfection of a woman." She is, to my eyes, the most soul subduing actress I ever saw. I do not mean from her personal charms, which are great, but from the truth,

force and pathos of her acting. I never have been so completely melted, moved and overcome at a theatre as by her performances. I do not think much of the other novelties of the day. Mrs. Mardyn, about whom much has been said and written, is vulgar without humour and hoydenish without real whim and vivacity. She is pretty, but a very bad actress. Kean—the prodigy—is to me insufferable. He is vulgar—full of trick and a complete mannerist. This is merely my opinion. He is cried up as a second Garrick —as a reformer of the stage, etc., etc.,—it may be so. He may be right and all other actors wrong—this is certain, he is either very good or very bad. I think decidedly the latter; and I find no medium opinions concerning him.

I am delighted with Young, who acts with great judgment, discrimination and feeling. I think him much the best actor at present on the English stage. His Hamlet is a very

fine performance, as is likewise his Stranger, Pierre, Chamout, etc. I have not seen his Macbeth, which I should not suppose could equal Cooper's. In fact in certain characters, such as may be classed with Macbeth, I do not think that Cooper has his equal in England. Young is the only actor I have seen that can be compared with him. I cannot help thinking if Cooper had a fair chance, and the public were to see him in his principal characters, he would take the lead at one of the London theatres. But there is so much party work, managerial influence, and such a widely spread and elaborate system of falsehood and misrepresentation connected with the London theatres, that a stranger who is not peculiarly favored by the managers, or assisted by the prepossessions of the public, stands no chance. I shall never forget Cooper's acting in Macbeth last spring, when he was stimulated to exertion by the presence of a number of British officers. I have seen nothing equal to it in

England. Cooper requires excitement, to arouse him from a monotonous, commonplaced manner he is apt to fall into, in consequence of acting so often before indifferent houses. I presume the crowded audiences which I am told have filled our theatres this season, must bring him out in full splendour.

While at London, I saw Campbell, who is busily employed printing his long promised work. The publisher has been extremely dilatory, and has kept poor Campbell lingering over the pages of this work for months longer than was necessary. He will in a little while get through with the printing of it, but it will not be published before spring. As usual, he is busy correcting, altering and adding to it, to the last, and cannot turn his mind to anything else until this is out of hand.

I am writing this letter at the warehouse, while waiting for Van Wart to go home to dinner—he is nearly ready and I must con-

clude; but will write to you again soon, and give you more chit-chat.

Peter continues a cripple from the rheumatism and is confined to the house; I do not think he will be able to go abroad before spring. He, however, is very cheerful under his maladies. All the Van Tromps are well and in high spirits from the Christmas holidays.

I saw Charles King and family the very day I left London, where they had just arrived. They were in fine health and spirits. They tell me James Renwick was enjoying himself in Edinburgh. I have not heard from him for a long time. I had a long letter from Mrs. Renwick some time since and meant to have answered it before this, but have not been in the letter writing mood. I shall soon however pay off all debts of the kind. Remember me affectionately to Mrs. and Miss Bradish and your family. I rejoice to hear Gouv Kemble has returned safe and hope his voyage has

been advantageous, but the war was too short to yield much pickings.

I am, dear Brevoort

(in great haste and hunger)

Affectionately yours

W. I.

Birmingham, March 15th 1816.

MY DEAR BREVOORT:—

I have received your most kind letter of Feby 10th and also the Magazines and Newspapers forwarded by Mr. Selden. I believe I am also still in your debt for your letter of the 1 Jany.; but indeed I have been so completely driven out of my usual track of thought and feeling, by "stress of weather" in business that I have not been able to pen a single line on any subject that was not connected with traffic. I have therefore a host of friendly letters by me, unanswered, but shall now endeavour to reply to them without further procrastination. We have, in common with most American houses here, had a hard winter of it in many manners, owing to the cross purposes of last fall's business, and have been harassed to death to meet our engagements. I have never passed so anxious a time in my life—my rest has been broken & my health & spirits almost prostrated; but thank heavens

we have weathered the storm & got into smooth waters; and I begin to feel myself again. Brown has done wonders, and proved himself an able financeer, and, tho' a small man, a perfect giant in business. I cannot help maintaining that James Renwick has behaved in the most gratifying manner. At a time when we were exceedingly straightened I wrote to him begging to know if he could in any way assist us to a part of the amount we were deficient. He immediately opened a credit to us for the full amount, guaranteeing the payment of it and asking no security from us than our bare word. The manner in which this was done heightened the merit of it—from the contrast it formed to the extreme distrust and tenfold caution that had universally prevailed through the commercial world of England, in the present distressed times. I mention this because I know you will delight to hear anything that tends to illustrate the worth of Renwick—whom, the more I know

of him, the more I find reason to value & admire. You mention that Renwick's letters induce you to imagine that his spirits are depressed and harassed. I have not observed this—you know he is not one of those mercurial beings that are readily excited or cast down; and whatever may be the state of his mind, it has no remarkable operation on the even tenor of his deportment. I believe he has been worried with law business in England, which is not the most pleasant occupation: but he has been spending his winter very agreeably & advantageously in Edinburgh, and is now on a short tour in France; on his return he will embark at Liverpool for New York, where he is very anxious to be.

I was delighted with your information that Gouv Kemble intended coming out to remain at Liverpool. Peter has since had a letter from him confirming it, and it has occasioned great joy in the castle of the Van Tromps. What would I not give if you could likewise

join us; but it would be selfish to wish it; as I am sure your interest will be better consulted by remaining in New York; and eventually your happiness also. Whatever gratification you might derive from wandering for a while about Europe, the enjoyment would but be temporary; and dependent upon continual novelty & frequent change of plan; but the solid permanent happiness of life must spring from some settled *home:* and where would you find a home like N York?

I declare to you, now that I find myself likely to be detained in Europe by unexpected employment I often feel my heart yearning toward N York and the dear circle of friends I have left there. I recollect the thousand charms of existence which surrounded us there, and am astonished to think how insensible we were to them—but so it is, we are always regretting the past, or languishing for the distant; every spot is fresh & green but the one we stand on.

BIRMINGHAM, MARCH 15th 1816

Your account of James Paulding's engagement & probability of the marriage soon taking place somewhat surprised, but at the same time gratified me. I am satisfied Paulding's talents will secure his fortunes with the ruling party and he will make a good husband and be all the happier for the change of condition. It is what we must all come to at last. I see you are hankering after it, and I confess I have done so for a long time past. We are however past that period when a man marries suddenly & inconsiderately—we may be longer making a choice, and consulting the convenience & concurrence of every circumstance, but we shall both come to it sooner or later. I therefore recommend you to marry without delay—you have sufficient means, connected with your knowledge & habits of business, to support a genteel establishment and I am certain that as soon as you are married you will experience a change in your ideas. All those vagabond,

roving propensities will cease. They are the offspring of idleness of mind and a want of something to fix the feelings. You are like a bark without an anchor, that drifts about at the mercy of every vagrant breeze, or trifling eddy—get a wife & she'll anchor you. But don't marry a fool because she has a pretty face—and don't seek after a great Belle—get such a girl as Mary Baillie—or get her if you can; though I am afraid she has still an unlucky kindness at heart for poor Bibby, which will stand in the way of her fortunes. I wish to God they were rich, and married, and happy.

By the bye, Bibby arrived in London while I was there and put up at the same Hotel with me, so that we were daily together. He is shortly to make his *début* at Covent Garden in Sir Pertinax. It is a most hazardous attempt. I feel very anxious for his success, but entertain strong apprehensions that the public may not take his imitations in the right

way. In these matters, it is all luck. I wished him to make his first appearance in some character suitable to his age, appearance & manner such as Belcom; which he would certainly play at least tolerably & prepossess by his personal advantages and appropriate deportment, & thus secure some foothold with the public—but he was determined to go for the whole & perhaps he is right. But should he fail, he falls into utter D——n, whereas my plan would have given him a leading place in public opinion.

Before this you will have learnt the fate of poor Angelica Livingston.—I will not make any trite remarks on such an event—in my short experience I have seen so many lovely beings swept from the circle of my intimacy that I almost have grown callous to the shock—but the news of poor Angelica's death reached me in a moment of loneliness & depression and affected me most deeply. I have heard that Serena's health is likewise

extremely delicate.—I hope she may take warning by the irreparable losses she has sustained, and take more care of her fragile frame,—she always looked too delicate and spiritual for this rough, coarse world. You say she often inquires after me.—Give her assurances of my constant recollection—she is the heroine of all my poetical thoughts where they would picture anything very feminine and lovely. But where is the hero of romance worthy to bear away so peerless a face?—Not among the worthy young traders of New York most certainly.

I have had much gratification from the epistles of that worthy little Tar, Jack Nicholson; who I find still sighs in the bottom of his heart for the fair Serena; though he declares that his hopes do not aspire to such perfection. Why did not the Varlet bring home the head of Rais Hammida & lay it at her feet; that would have been a chivalric exploit few ladies could have withstood—and if Paulding had

only dished him up in full *length* (if I may be allowed the word) in a wood-cut in the Naval Chronicle like little David of yore with the head of Goliah in his fist, I think his suit would have been irresistible. In his last letter Nicholson talks something of the possibility of his visiting England this year. I hope government will keep him better employed, though I should receive him with open arms and be more than glad at the meeting. But I want him to continue in the career of honour and promotion and hope before many years to greet him as a Commodore.

You desire me in your letters to give you anecdotes of characters that I meet with and of anything interesting or amusing that occurs in the course of my rovings. But in truth I had been so much engrossed by the cares of this world for some time past that I have not sought any society of the kind you are conscious about. My last stay in London which was for two months was a period of

great anxiety and I felt in no mood to form new acquaintances, or even to enjoy scenes around me. I seem to have lost my *cast*, and to have lost also all relish and aptitude for my usual pursuits. I hope to be able hereafter to give you more interesting letters. I think I shall visit Scotland this Summer, and if I can arrange matters shall previously make a short excursion to Paris, in May or June. My movements however must depend on various circumstances connected with business and Peter's health. He is still confined to the house; but more from extreme delicacy, in consequence of long nursing, than from any positive indisposition. When the Spring advances & the weather becomes settled & warm he will be able to take air & exercise. I long to have him reinstated, that he may accompany me in my outdoor rambles. I almost begin to lose all idea of him as a man of health & vigour.

During my last visit to London, as I was

one day strolling in Bond Street whom should I encounter but little cousin John, alias Tophet. You may be sure I was astonished at the reconnoitre; and not less pleased. The surprise was equal on his part, as he knew nothing of my being in England, and indeed had heard at one time that I was dead. He gave me another Volume of his eventful history; which certainly rivals that of Gil Blas. He is in great favour with the Governor of Trinidad, and has an office worth 2,000$ per ann. besides other casual employments which assist to keep him comfortable. He has come to England in quest of a new office which it was expected would be made by Parliament, this session—but as it does not at present seem probable he thinks of returning. I saw him almost daily during the remainder of my stay in town. He is just the same honest, warm hearted, queer, amusing little fish—and is full of his recollections of New York which he thinks rather a preferable place to heaven.

BIRMINGHAM, MARCH 15th 1816

When I was last in Liverpool (about 2 mos. since) your Books were in a state of great forwardness—I have not heard since about them but trust they must have been shipped. I shall write down on the subject & likewise attend to your request in purchasing & sending out others.

You do not mention whether you are likely to make any arrangement with McTavish & the N. W. Company. I really feel great interest in your temporal as well as spiritual concerns and should like to know how you are making out in the world & what are your plans. If you remain in N York I think you ought to have some regular employment that should occupy part of your time and claim your personal attention. It would prevent that *ennui* of which you complain, and under which, in my days of Idleness I have so often suffered. Mere study will not do—it must be employment for the hands, where no great intellect is required; so that it may be attended

to in every mood of mind; and engage the attention when too enfeebled or relaxed for more intellectual pursuits.

By letters from Johnson, at Liverpool, I find he is on the point of sailing for New York, to resume the Government of a Colony. I can fancy the great joy that will be diffused throughout the establishment on his return & would give more than I choose to mention to be present on the occasion. He will give you some idea of the *gay dissipated* life we lead in London; where he figured in great style in the west end of the town.

I am very happy to hear that Mrs. Bradish and Eliza have recovered their health in a great degree, and hope to hear in my next letters of their perfect reestablishment. Give them my most affectionate regards and tell Mrs. Bradish that often & often this winter in London, when I have been suffering in my solitary chamber from a cold and indisposition, have I wished myself under her fostering

care and partaking of her grand specific, wine whey. By the mass, I look back with as much longing to her bounteous establishment, as ever the children of Israel did to the flesh pots of Egypt, or Tom Philips, to Norton's kitchen.

I wish you would give me a particular account of the whole household not forgetting old William, Fanny, and Flora & her offspring. —I hope the latter are cherished for my sake.

I shall endeavour in a day or two to pay off my arrearages to Mrs. Renwick for her long & delightful letter received last November.— I have not been in the vein of writing since or it should have long since been answered. William Renwick arrived in Liverpool during my absences so that I have not seen him.

I have had also a very agreeable letter from Sam Swartwout giving a promising account of his farm and his little wife, both of which promise to be very productive. I hope he may have abundant cause of rejoicing from both.

And now I must bring this garrulous scrawl to a conclusion, as I have many other letters to write now I am in the vein.—What a scrimble-scramble letter I have written! However, I have scribbled away just as I have been accustomed to talk to you—perfectly unstudied and unreserved, trusting to your friendship to excuse weaknesses and your discretion not to repeat confidings. Many parts of this letter I would not have trusted to any eye but yours, for though there are no matters of great secrecy, yet they are foolish thoughts & feelings that I would not wish repeated—so keep them to yourself.

I wish you would send me the numbers of the Analectic Mag. that have the traits of Indian character—& the story of King Philip; likewise a copy of the History of New York—send them by the first opportunity.

By the bye I have never heard whether a quantity of music that Peter sent out for me, & which must have arrived shortly after I left

America, was ever delivered according to my direction to the Misses Livingston; and if so, how it pleased. I wish you would let me know.

And now, my dear fellow, with my best remembrances to your worthy parents and family I have only to give you the affectionate regards & hearty blessing of your friend

W. I.

P. S. I am highly pleased with a favourable account I have received from others as well as yourself, of little Newman. I have had no letter from him, at which I am disappointed, but suppose he did not know where I was exactly. I wish, should his Ship come to New York, you would be attentive to him & see if he wants any assistance in procuring Books; or anything that may be of real service to him in acquiring useful information. His other wants will be taken care of; and perhaps Decatur's idea is correct,—that young officers should be taught to live on their pay, as it makes them careful managers.

King Stephen must have arrived long before this letter with his cargo of live stock. I have seen none of the folks act that he has taken out; but should think that Barnes & his wife would be acquisitions. He offered Miss O'Neale 6,000£ for one year's engagement to perform in the American Theatres—but her engagements here would not permit her to accept the offer. She continues in great currency & is shortly to appear in comedy.

Little Booth is well & often speaks of you—she has lost Fidele, who died of the gout in his stomach from high living—thank God for this dispensation—he was a cursed noisy nasty little cur though his little mistress *took on* sadly for his loss.

Charles King & his family are all alive & merry in London where I have frequently the pleasure of seeing them. It was like being in New York to get among his joyous household.

Farewell.

W. I.

LIVERPOOL, APRIL 29th 1816

Liverpool, April 29th 1816.

MY DEAR BREVOORT:—

I wrote you a rigmarole letter some time since from Birmingham. Since then I have been most of the time at Liverpool leading a most dreary life; for the hard times here make every body dismal. Peter is still at Birmingham, and the Spring has been so backward that he has not been able to trust his rheumatic limbs out of the house.

Your books were forwarded some time since by Ogden Richards & Selden. They ought to have been sent out long before but the Bookseller sent the Box thro' mistake to our Warehouse instead of Richards', and our clerks had no directions concerning them. So they reclined quietly in a corner until my arrival. By this opportunity I send you the last number of the Edinburgh Review, which is just out—it will come in the letter bag. There is a Surtout, close Bodied coat & Waist coat for you at our Counting House. I shall forward

it by the Rosalie, Capt. Murray, to sail 8th of next month.

I presume before this you have seen accounts from the London Papers of Bibby's first appearance in Sir Pertinax. The criticisms are favourable beyond my hopes. Even that stern critic the Examiner speaks in the highest terms of him. These favourable accounts are confirmed by a letter from Miss Booth to my Brother, who says "he acted *excellently* well." She says the Boxes were uncommonly brilliant; that there was occasional disturbance from the Galleries which were crowded by holiday people who had come to see a new afterpiece and who, not being able to hear themselves, determined that nobody else should.—At length the pit rose, hats waved, & pit & boxes united in applause *long and loud*, after which the piece went admirably; and he made his exit amidst "the most general applause she ever heard." This is a very satisfactory account, as we may depend upon

it—which we cannot do on newspaper criticisms.

She added, "I don't know why the play has not yet been repeated; a few days I believe will decide the determination of the managers in his behalf. I hear they wish him to act some other character instead of Sir Pertx which, if he does, he will be lost, for it will be the general opinion that he failed in that—and if he plays Shylock he brings Kean's friends upon him before he has sufficient hold of the town to crush any attempt of party."

You see poor Bibby has his hands full and a very difficult card to play. These London managers are hard fellows to deal with. I should not be surprised if the real object is their wish to make a three years engagement with Bibby—which they hinted at when he first applied, in case he should succeed, but which he told me he should not agree to on any account.—One thing is certain, that it must do him great good with American audi-

ences that he has played in a London theatre with success.

Having said this much about Bibby, I have little more to add; for I have nothing interesting new in the present round of my existence to write about. Davidson had a letter from James Renwick some days since, dated at Paris which he was about leaving for Holland on his way to England. I hope to see him here before long.

Give my affectionate regards to Mrs. Bradish & the girls, and if the worthy Governor has returned, shake him heartily by the hand for me and give my good wishes to the rest of the household.

Your friend

W. I.

LIVERPOOL, MAY 9th 1816

Liverpool, May 9th 1816.

MY DEAR BREVOORT:—

By the Rosalie, under care of Capt. Murray, I sent a Trunk of clothes to my Brother Ebnr in which are a surtout, Blk. Coat and Blk. cloth waistcoat for you. I have also directed a Bookseller to send some books, in a paper parcel, to Messrs. Ogden, Richards & Selden to be forwarded to you—they will probably come by this ship.

I have nothing new to tell you. I wrote to you recently, giving an account of Bibby's first appearance. He plays again tomorrow night in Shylock and Sir Archy.

I was in hopes of hearing from you by the Rosalie, but was disappointed. A letter from you is like a gleam of sunshine through the darkness that seems to lower upon my mind. I am here alone, attending to business—and the times are so hard that they sicken my very soul. Good God, what would I give to be once more with you, and all this mortal coil

shuffled off of my heart. I must say however that I have received very kind attention from some of the Liverpool families of late & could easily form a very polite and agreeable circle of acquaintances—but the cares of business, in these gloomy times harass my mind & unfit me for society, and I have therefore avoided it as much as possible. There is one Lady here however, a Mrs. Rathbone with whom I am much pleased—she is amiable, intelligent, and has a charming simplicity of manners. She has the person and looks of our little friend Ann McMasters, and a few evenings since I found her in a gown of a kind of mulberry coloured silk similar to that little Greatheart used to wear. All this made her look like an old acquaintance and there were a thousand recollections of home, and distant friends, & past scenes, conjured up by the trifling circumstance, that almost made my heart overflow.

I met with a Mr. Shepherd at dinner some

days since, he is a clergyman, a friend of Roscoe's, and one of the Literati of Liverpool. He is very excentric & facetious in conversation. He has since sent me a book of his editing —accompanied with some civil compliments about my history of N York, and an invitation to dine with him at his residence in the country. I have evaded his invitation, for truly I am not in the vein just now. My dear Brevoort what would I not give to have you with me. In my lonely hours I think of the many many happy days we have passed together—and feel that there is no friend in the world to whom my heart turns so completely as it does to you. For some time before I left New York I thought you had grown cold & indifferent to me. I felt too proud to speak frankly on the subject but it grieved me bitterly. Your letters have convinced me that I was mistaken, and they were like cordials to my feelings.

I am writing very weakly & very garrulously

—but I have no restraint in writing to you—as I am convinced that what I write will be recd with indulgence. You know all my failings & foolishness and regard them with a friendly eye; but do not let any one else see my nonsense.

In the trunk which contains the clothes is a number of Lord Byron's Hebrew Melodies. It is for Eliza Bradish—will you see that she gets it? Let me know how she & her mother and all the family do.

Write to me, my dear fellow, as often as you have half an hour to bestow on an old friend.

I expect James Renwick here in eight or ten days. I suppose he will soon take passage for America.

Peter is still at Birmingham but I hope his health will permit him to come to Liverpool in about a week.

Your friend

W. I.

Birmingham, July 16th 1816.

MY DEAR BREVOORT:—

I have tried repeatedly to arouse myself to the exertion of answering your long and delightful letter of May 18th, but found as often, that I might as well attempt to raise spirits from "the vasty deep" as to raise my own spirits to anything like animation. I have been so harassed & over ridden by the cares & anxieties of business for a long time past, that I have at times felt almost broken down in health and spirits. This was particularly the case this spring, when I was for a long time alone at Liverpool, brooding over the hardships of these disordered times. Peter's return to Liverpool enabled me to crawl out of the turmoil for a while, and I have for some time past been endeavouring to renovate myself in the dear little circle of my sister's family. I have attempted to divert my thoughts into other channels; to revive the literary feeling & to employ myself

with my pen; but at present it is impossible. My mind is in a sickly state and my imagination so blighted that it cannot put forth a blossom nor even a green leaf—time & circumstances must restore them to their proper tone.

I thank you in the most heartfelt manner for your assistance to my worthy brother Ebenezer. The difficulties he must experience give me more anxiousness than anything else. I hope he may be able to surmount them all, and that he may work through the present stormy season without any material injury.

I am happy to find from your letter that your own circumstances are so good—as to your not having added much to your fortune since I left you, it is not a matter of concern. I was only apprehensive lest you should have experienced heavy losses in these precarious times—and your silence on the subject for a considerable while filled me with uneasiness. I rejoice in the confidence you express of your

future prospects, and in the intention you seem to entertain of forming a matrimonial connexion. I am sure it will be a worthy one; and though as a Bachelor I might lament you as lost to the fraternity, and feel conscious that some of those links were broken which as bachelors bound us together, yet I could not suffer myself to regret a change of situation which would give you so large an accession of domestic homeful enjoyment. As to my return to America, to which you advert in terms that fill my heart, I must say it partakes of that uncertainty which at this moment envelops all my future prospects—I must wait here awhile in a passive state, watching the turn of events, and how our affairs are likely to turn out.

"My bread is indeed *cast upon the waters*"—and I can only say that I hope to "*find it after many days.*" It is not long since I felt myself quite sure of fortune's smiles, and began to entertain what I thought very sober and

rational schemes for my future comfort & establishment. At present, I feel so tempest tossed and weather beaten that I shall be content to be quits with fortune for a very moderate portion and give up all my sober schemes as the dreams of fairy-land. But I will make no promises or resolutions at present, as I know they would be like those formed at Sea in a storm, which are forgotten as soon as we tread the shore or the weather grows propitious. This you may be assured of —all my ideas of home and settled life center in New York—and I have had too little pleasure or even comfort in England to wean me from that delightful little spot of earth.

I have written this letter more to account for my not writing a better one. Indeed I have scarcely anything to write about even if I were in vein. I am merely vegetating for the present, and quite out of the way of interesting characters or interesting incidents. On my way up here from Liverpool, I came down by

Shrewsbury & stopped for a couple of days with a young gentleman of my acquaintance, at his father's seat a few miles beyond Chester on the border of Wales. In one of our morning strolls along the banks of the Alun, a beautiful little pastoral stream that rises along the Welsh Mountains & throws itself into the Dee, we encountered a Veteran angler of old Isaac Walton's school. He was an old Greenwich outdoor pensioner—had lost one leg in the battle at Camperdown, had been in America in his youth & indeed had been quite a rover, but for many years past had settled himself down in his native village not far distant, where he lived very independently on his pension & some other small annual sums amounting in all to about 40£. His great hobby & indeed the business of his life was to angle—I found he had read Isaac Walton very attentively—he seemed to have imbibed all his simplicity of heart, contentment of mind and fluency of tongue. We kept company

with him almost the whole day—wandering along the beautiful banks of the river, admiring the ease and elegant dexterity with which the old fellow managed his angle, throwing the fly with unerring certainty at a great distance & among overhanging banks, and waving it gracefully in the air to keep it from entangling, as he stumped with his staff & wooden leg from one bend of the river to another. He kept up a continual flow of cheerful and entertaining talk, and what I particularly liked him for was, that though we tried everyway to entrap him into some abuse of America & its inhabitants, there was no getting him to utter an ill natured word concerning us. His whole conversation and deportment illustrated old Isaac's maxims as to the benign influence of angling over the human heart.

I wished continually that you had been present, as I know you would have enjoyed with exquisite relish, this genuine Angler, &

the characteristic scenes through which we rambled with him. I ought to mention that he had two companions, one a ragged picturesque varlet, that had all the air of a veteran poacher & I warrant could have found every fish pond in the neighbourhood in the darkest night—the other was a disciple of the old philosopher's, studying the art under him & was son & heir apparent to the Landlady of the Village tavern.

This amusing rencontre brought all the beauties of old Isaac Walton to my recollection—and awakened so many pleasant associations and rural feelings that I have had a hankering ever since to take a ramble in Derbyshire, where I believe the scene of his book is laid—and if I can only muster up spirits enough to take a solitary excursion for a week or ten days, I do not know but I shall go that way as soon as the rainy weather, which has prevailed for some two months past, has given place to a little gleam of summer and

sunshine. Should that be the case, I may pick up something in my rambles to scribble to you about—but it is very possible that dismal letters from N York may intervene & take away all disposition from the excursion. I cannot go into notice of the many very interesting anecdotes of my friends which your letter contains. I am much gratified by the prospects of McT——s settling in N. Y. and making such an agreeable matrimonial connexion. The Catons arrived at Liverpool since I left there. Peter dined in company with them and was very much pleased with them. I shall make a point of cultivating the acquaintance of Betsey Caton should I meet with her & she be disposed to be sociable. As to your concern in business with McT—— I think it might prove a very advantageous connexion—and he is certainly a charming companion—but beware of partnerships—they throw you at the mercy of another person's discretion; over whose judgment or

inclination you may have no control. You can make your fortune without perplexing or thwarting yourself with anyone. From the little I have seen of business I am satisfied there is nothing that a man should be more wary & considerate about, than entering into partnership.

Long before this reaches you Renwick will have returned and you will have had many a long talk with him about his travels. I have not been able to enjoy his society in Europe as I expected. We made a charming tour in Wales together last summer—and I had anticipated a delightful journey to Scotland; but I had to halt in Liverpool to attend to business, and then again I have troubles.

Remember me affectionately to Mrs. Renwick and her family. I envy you the happy hours you will pass at their summer retreat. I recollect the place as a beautiful one—but Mrs. Renwick has a talent of diffusing happiness around her wherever she is.

I must also beg you to remember me most heartily to my worthy inmates at Mrs. Bradishes, particularly that good man & true Govr Wharton, who I hope will never have need to break the Guinea he got from me in London. I trust his worthy compeer Walker is yet with you, as usual *on the wing for Virginia.* I hope to find him unflown on my return.

I wrote some time since to Eliza Bradish and hope the letter reached her in safety, as I would not have all the secrets it contained known to the world on any account. Give my warmest remembrances to her and her mother, and intreat the latter to refrain from further purchases, lest she ruin herself with good bargains.

I am extremely pained to hear from you of the continued ill health of Serena L——If her father wishes to preserve her from following the lovely beings that have been swept from her side—he should send her at once to the south of France—were she to go out there

in the early part of the Autumn and remain in those climates until next summer she might be fully restored—but the misfortune is that these expeditions are always taken too late. I beg you to give my particular remembrances to her and her sisters.

This is a sad lackadaisical scrawl but I had no idea, when I began that I should have been able to scrawl so much. Do not let the meagreness of my letters discourage you from writing. In my present listless & comfortless state of mind your letters are inexpressively gratifying—and the last I received I have kept by me as a cordial against low spirits.

Give my sincere regards to your worthy parents and your sister and believe me my dear fellow

Most truly yours
W. I.

If that worthy little Tar Jack Nicholson is with you tell him I return him a thou-

sand thanks for his letter and will answer it soon.

I am afraid that we must give up all expectation of seeing Gouv Kemble out here.—The disappointment will be great to us all; but I hope his present scheme will be a profitable one, in which case I shall not repine—I would write to him but he is such a bird of passage that it is like shooting flying; there is no knowing when a letter would reach him.

I shall be happy to hear that James K. P. is married to G—— and divorced from the Analectic. I think James is in the way of fortune and preferment, if he has spirit & judgment to manage his opportunities, & I think he will make a good husband & she certainly will make an excellent wife. But his connexion with the magazine, tho' it yields present profit, is I am afraid of no advantage to his literary reputation, for the Naval Chronicle is, in every respect, executed in his worst style.

Birmingham, Nov. 6th 1816.

MY DEAR BREVOORT:—

I received some time since your letter of Sept. 8th, and feel most grateful for these repeated proofs of kind recollections especially when I consider the poor returns I make. You threaten to charge me with something more than want of punctuality if I do not write oftener and I am sensible my silence exposes me to many hard imputations, but I cannot help it—I can only say it is not for want of having you continually in my thoughts and near my heart, nor for want of the constant desire and frequent resolve to write. But some how or other there has been such a throng of worldly cares hurrying backward & forward through my mind for a long time past, that it is even as bare as a market place; and when I do take hold of my pen, I feel so poverty struck, such mental sterility, that I throw it down again in despair of writing anything that should give you gratification.

In fact I was always a poor precarious animal —but am just now worse than ever. So bear with my present delinquency & perhaps at some future moment, when the fit is on me and I am fresh of thought & ready of word (as I sometimes am when I least expect it) I will repay you tenfold.

In my last letter, which I am ashamed to say was written so long ago as July last, I talked of an excursion into Derbyshire and promised you particulars if anything presented worth writing about.

Not having been in a narrative mood since my return, I have suffered so long a time to elapse, that impressions made on my mind have been effaced—incidents have lost the freshness of novelty and all the little associations of thought, & feeling & fancy that constitute the enjoyment of a ramble and the charm of its recital have completely evaporated. To attempt to give you a detail therefore would be useless, though I cannot help

talking a little about it, as I have scarcely anything else to furnish out a letter, and as I know it will bring up a thousand agreeable recollections to your mind of similar rambles you have taken in this country.

According to arrangements made by letter with Peter I met him at Buxton, to which place he travelled from Liverpool, in the identical Tilbury in which you and he performed your Scottish peregrinations. I arrived rather late in the evening so that he had dined & gone out; but as I knew his old haunts I asked the way to the theatre & was shewn to what had once been a barn, but was now converted to the seat of Empire & the epitome of all the Kingdoms of the earth. Here I found Peter enjoying with the most perfect complacency & satisfaction, some old stock play, which he had seen performed a hundred times by the best actors in the world, & which was now undergoing murder & profanation from the very worst. You know of old his

accommodating palate in this particular; and what relishing appetite he will either "feed on the mountain" or "batten on the moor." The worst of the matter however is, that in his unbounded good will towards the vagrant race, he takes the whole company under his protection and won't allow you to laugh at any of them. This troop seemed almost an establishment—the Manager, his wife & daughter performed in the play and four of his children danced a garland dance. I understood the establishment was somewhat on the plan of poor Twaits' theatrical *commonwealth*—& the company divided on an average of about 7/6 each per week.

At the hotel where we put up we had a most singular & whimsical assemblage of beings. I don't know whether you were ever at an English watering place, but if you have not been, you have missed the best opportunity at studying English oddities, both moral and physical.—I no longer wonder at the English

being such excellent caricaturists, they have such an inexhaustible number & variety of subjects to study from. The only care should be not to follow fact too closely for I'll swear I have met with characters & figures that would be condemned as extravagant; if faithfully delineated by pen or pencil. At a watering place like Buxton where people really resort for health, you see the great tendency of the English to run into excrescences and bloat out into grotesque deformities. As to noses I say nothing of them, though we had every variety. Some snubbed and turned up, with distended nostrils, like a dormer window on the roof of a house—others convex and twisted like a Buck handled knife & others magnificently efflorescent like a full blown cauliflower. But as to the persons that were attached to their noses, fancy every distortion, tuberance & pompous embellishment that can be produced in the human form by high and gross feeding, by the bloating operations of malt

liquors, by the rheuming influence of a damp foggy vaporish climate. One old fellow was an exception to this, for instead of acquiring that expansion and sponginess to which old people are prone in this country from the long course of internal & external soaking they experience, he had grown dry & stiff in the process of years. The skin of his face had so shrunk away that he could not close eyes or mouth—the latter therefore stood on a perpetual ghastly grin; and the former on an incessant stare. He had but one serviceable joint in his body which is at the bottom of the back bone, and that creaked & grated whenever he bent. He could not raise his feet from the ground, but skated along the drawing room carpet, whenever he wished to ring the bell. The only signs of moisture in his whole body was a pellucid drop that I occasionally noticed on the end of a long dry nose. He used generally to shuffle about in company with a little fellow who was fat on one side and

lean on the other. That is to say, he was warped on one side as if he had scorched before the fire; he had a wry neck, which made his head lean on one shoulder—his hair was snugly powdered and he had a round, smirky smiling apple face with a bloom on it like that of a frost bitten leaf in Autumn. We had an old fat general by the name of Trotter who had, I suspect, been promoted to his high rank to get him out of the way of more able and active officers, being an instance that a man may occasionally rise in the world through absolute lack of merit. I could not help watching the movements of this redoubtable Old Hero, who, I'll warrant had been the champion & safe guard of half the garrison towns in England, and fancying to myself how Bonaparte would have delighted in having such toast & butter generals to deal with. This old lad is doubtless a sample of those generals that flourished in the old military school—when armies would manoeuvre & watch each other for months;

now and then have a desperate skirmish and after marching & countermarching about the "low countries" through a glorious campaign, retire on the first pinch of cold weather, into snug winter quarters in some fat Flemish town, and eat & drink & fiddle through the winter. Boney must have sadly disconcerted the comfortable system of these old warriors by the harassing restless cut & slash mode of warfare that he introduced. He has put an end to all the old *carte and tierce* system in which the cavaliers of the old school fought so decorously as it were with a small sword in one hand and a chapeau in the other. During his career there has been a sad laying on the shelf of old generals who could not keep up with the hurry, the fierceness and dashing of the system; and among the number I presume has been my worthy housemate old Trotter. The old gentleman, in spight of his warlike title, had a most pacific appearance. He was large and fat—with a broad hazy massive face, a sleepy

eye and a full double chin. He had a deep ravine from each corner of his mouth, not occasioned by any irascible contraction of the muscles, but apparently the deep worn channels of two rivulets of gravy that oozed out from the huge mouthfuls that he masticated. But I forbear to dwell on the odd beings that were congregated together in our Hotel. I have been thus prolix about the old general because you desired me in one of your letters to give you ample details whenever I appeared to be in company with the "great and glorious" and old Trotter is more deserving of the epithets than any other personages I have lately encountered.

Nov. 13th. From the foregoing scribbling you will perceive that after setting out with many apologies for having nothing to say, I had absolutely got into a most garrulous vein, and had I not been interrupted I believe I

should have scribbled off a very long & very flippant letter. I was obliged however to break off to attend to some other matter and have not been able since to get into the narrative vein again. As I hear the Pacific is about sailing from Liverpool I must e'en hurry off this letter as it is, lest another long period elapse before you get a line from me. Should I at any time feel in the mood to give you some more Derbyshire Sketches I will not fail to take pen in hand.

I must now say a word or two in reply to your letter of the 8th Sept.r I rejoice to find that Mac is absolutely linked to Miss Caton, and wish all happiness to their union. I have not met with the Catons in England, though I have heard of them. They were greatly admired & noticed at Cheltenham. The Duke of Wellington paid them particular attention to the great annoyance of many dowagers who had daughters anxious for fashion & notoriety.

Your account of the brevity of the old lady's nether garments really distresses me—what will become of the world when these land marks of primitive decorum & staid discretion are carried away by the tide of fashion. If she does not return to her former sobriety of apparel and demean herself like a most grave & reverend young gentlewoman, I insist that you take Flora from under her guardianship. By the way, I cannot help observing that this fashion of short skirts must have been invented by the French ladies as a complete trick upon John Bull's "women-folk." It was introduced just at the time the English flocked in such crowds to Paris. The French women you know are remarkable for pretty feet and ankles and can display them in perfect serenity. The English are remarkable for the contrary. Seeing the proneness of the English women to follow French fashions, they therefore led them into this disastrous one; and sent them home with

their petticoats up to their knees exhibiting such a variety of sturdy little legs, as would have afforded Hogarth an ample choice to match one of his assemblages of queer heads. It is really a great source of curiosity & amusement on the promenade of a Watering place, to observe sturdy English women, trudging about in their stout leather shoes, and to study the various *understandings* brought to view by this mischievous fashion.

I must conclude as this scrawl will be too long. When you write next let me know something about the movements of that great Scavenger Swartwout & how his peat marshes came on, how are Mr. & Mrs. Cooper making out, where he is acting &c; what is Charles Nicholson doing—&c.

Remember me most affectionately to Mrs. Renwick and her family & let me know when the worthy professor quits this transitory state —of celibacy.

Give my warmest regards to your good lady

Hostess, and also the ladies of the little parlour.—I wrote to the old gentlewoman a long while since, when I sent her Moore's Sacred Melodies. I expect an answer from her.—Remember me to Johnson & the rest of the household.

Yours most heartily

W. I.

Birmingham, Dec. 9th 1816.

MY DEAR BREVOORT:—

Since I last wrote I have received your letter of October 16th. I congratulate you with all my soul on the marriage of your sister with our invaluable friend Renwick. It cannot but prove a happy union, and must add largely to your means of domestic happiness. I trust, my dear fellow, providence is laying a solid foundation for the welfare of yourself and your relatives and that you will all go on to flourish in well merited and honorable prosperity.

I feel deeply sensible of the sympathy you evince in my cares and troubles. I assure you however that they were chiefly occasioned by my apprehensions for my connections, and being now confident that my brothers in New York will be able to weather the storm and spread their sails cheerily on the return of fair weather, I shall not let present difficulties give me any uneasiness. I thank you again

and again for your kind assistance to my worthy brother the Major. He is one of the most excellent little men living and I feel any good office done to him ten times more than if it were rendered to myself. I beg you will continue to give him an occasional call. Your advice will often be of service to him as you have a better idea of general business than he probably has, from his being exclusively occupied by one branch of trade.

Frank Ogden and his brother Peter passed a couple of days in Birmingham, not long since. Frank gave me a great many entertaining anecdotes about the establishment at the Battery and its dependent colony, and made me completely homesick. Your letters also, have frequently the same effect. They contain so many allusions to old jokes that have passed between us—so many characteristic sketches of persons and scenes about which we have so often gossiped and laughed in our little chamber councils, that they

awaken a thousand recollections and delightful associations. After all, it is the charm of existence to have some crony who exactly jumps with our humour; in whose company we can completely unbutton and throw loose the garb of cautious reserve in which our minds are generally so straightly clad—and can give every thought and whim free scope. I do delight in these snug confidings, wherein we canvas the events of the day and amuse ourselves with the odd characters and circumstances we have witnessed. It is really doubling existence, and living over past moments with increased enjoyment; for there seems to be more brightness in the reflected gleams of gay hours, than there was in their original sunshine.

You will smile when I tell you that, after all the grave advice once I gave you about getting married, I really felt regret on fancying, from the purport of one of your letters, that you had some serious thoughts of the kind;

and that I have indulged in selfish congratulation on finding nothing in your subsequent letters to warrant such an idea. All this too, notwithstanding that I wish you happiness, and am certain that the married state is most likely to insure it. But we are all selfish beings. Fortune by her tardy favours and capricious freaks seems to discourage all my matrimonial resolves, and, if I am doomed to live an old bachelor, I am anxious to have good company. I cannot bear that all my old companions should launch away into the married state and leave me alone to tread this desolate and sterile shore and it is a consoling and a cherished thought with me, under every vicissitude; that I shall still be able to return home, nestle down comfortable beside you, and have wherewithal to shelter me from the storms and buffetings of this uncertain world. Thank heaven I was brought up in simple and inexpensive habits, and I have satisfied myself that, if need be, I can resume them without

repining or inconvenience. Though I am willing, therefore, that fortune should shower her blessings upon me, and think I can enjoy them as well as most men, yet I shall not make myself unhappy if she chooses to be scanty, and shall take the portion allotted me with a cheerful and contented mind. I am writing you a queer rigmarole letter containing no news in return for your delightful letters which are perfect chronicles of domestic events. You have the best knack of writing domestic letters of any one I know—every sentence presents me a picture, or gives me a bulletin about some one or another of my friends and the very careless, ready manner in which they are dashed off gives them truth and spirit. I wish I had something to give you in exchange, but just now I am sterile. Birmingham anecdotes would give you little entertainment. Yet I must say I have found many good people here, and some few that are really choice. Among them I must especially mention my

particular friend the Revd. Rann Kennedy, of whom I may some day or other give you a more full account. He is a most eccentric character, and is both my admiration and amusement. He is a man of real *genius*—preaches admirable sermons—and has for a long time past been on the *point* of producing two or three poetic works, though he has not as yet *committed* any of his poetry to paper. He however says he has it all in his brain—and indeed has occasionally recited some passages of it to Peter and myself that have absolutely delighted us. With all this he has the naïveté of a child; is somewhat hypochondriacal and in short is one of the queerest mortals living. He is a great favourite of Doctor Parr's and is very anxious to make me acquainted with that formidable old Grecian. He has two or three likenesses of Parr hanging about his house and the old fellow is a great deal at Kennedy's when in Birmingham to the great annoyance of Miss Kennedy. For Parr is a

great gourmand and epicure and when he dines with any of his particular friends is very apt to extend his domineering spirit to the concerns of the larder and the kitchen, and order matters to his own palate; an assumption of privilege which no true housewife can tolerate.

I have not seen Peter for four months past. In fact not since our little excursion into Derbyshire, which I delight to look back upon, as a green spot in this barren year. I should have joined him before this at Liverpool but he has been continually giving us hopes of his coming up here, and we now look confidently for him in a day or two to remain and eat his Christmas dinner with us. You cannot think how heartfelt the gratification is at these little family assemblages, particularly with us who are "strangers and sojourners in the land" and see nothing but gloom and troubles around us. You have no idea of the distress and misery that prevails in this country; it is beyond the power of description. In

America you have financial difficulties, the embarrassments of trade and the distress of merchants but here you have what is far worse, the distress of the poor—not merely mental sufferings—but the absolute miseries of nature, hunger, nakedness, wretchedness of all kinds that the labouring people in this country are liable to. In the best of times they do but subsist, but in adverse times they starve. How this country is to extricate itself from its present embarrassments, how it is to emerge from the poverty that seems to be overwhelming it, and how the government is to quiet the multitudes that are already turbulent and clamorous, and are yet but in the beginning of their real miseries, I cannot conceive, but I have somehow or other rambled away into a theme which would neither edify nor amuse you, so we will not pursue it.

I have ordered Mr. Muncaster to forward the books you wrote for and shall occasionally send such new works as I think you may

relish; except it be such light popular works as are likely to be immediately reprinted in America at a much cheaper rate.

The books lent me by Colonel Gibbs are at Liverpool and when I go down there I will pack them up and take care that he shall receive them in good order. You may tell him I shall be happy to be of any service to him in Europe.

I wish when next you see Mrs. Renwick, you would give her my congratulations on the various changes and increasings of her family. I think I can see her, the centre of a happy domestic system, which is seasoned and gladdened by the emanations of her generous heart. God bless her! say I—and grant that the happiness she delights to shed around her may all be reflected back upon herself—and then I'm sure she will be the happiest of mortals.

Remember me likewise to your worthy parents, who are enjoying the greatest bless-

ing of old age, that of seeing their children prosperous and happy.

I feel greatly indebted to my good friend Mrs. Bradish for dreaming so often about me, and indeed I value it as no trifling visitation of kindness & good will, that she who has so many domesticated with her occasionally, should bestow such particular recollection upon me. I am glad to hear such favorable accounts of Eliza's health, and that the dissipation of Elizabethtown has agreed with her so well. How I should delight to spend a cosy hour in the little parlour! Well, well! We shall all get together again by and bye and have merry times once more.

You mention the prosperity of the theatre. I wish you could interest yourselves for the Johnsons, they are old friends of mine and both Peter and myself are very anxious for their success. Ellen Johnson is a charming girl and I think must prove a good actress. I have never seen her perform. How is Bibby

making out? I presume he is giving touches of Kean as I perceive he acts some of Kean's characters. How does his affair with Mary Bailly go on?

Give my best regards to the worthy Governor and the rest of the household. I am

my dear Brevoort yours ever

W. I.

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Give my best regards to the worthy Governor & the rest of the household. I am,

My dear Brevoort
Yours ever
W.P.

I have not suffered illness to prevent me from keeping every thing in train; and indeed my recovery has been retarded by remaining at my post during the unhealthy season of last summer, though urged by my physicians to spend the hot months at the watering places in the mountains. I do not pretend to any great skill as a diplomatist; but in whatever situation I am placed in life, when I doubt my skill I endeavour to make up for it by conscientious assiduity.

While I was in Paris on driving out one day with my uncle in the Champs Elysees we nearly ran over my old friend Rogers. We stopped and took him in. He was on one of his yearly epicurean visits to Paris to enjoy the Italian opera and other refined sources of pleasure. The head of age bows below him now, but his intellect is clear as ever, and his talents and taste for society in full vigor. He breakfasts out as usual twice and I have never known him more delightful. He would sit for two or three hours continually conversing and giving anecdotes of all the conspicuous persons who have figured within the last sixty years; with most of whom he has been on terms of intimacy. He has refined upon the art of telling a story until he has brought it to the most perfect simplicity — where there is not a word too much nor too little, and where every word has its effect. His manner too is the most quiet, natural and unpretending that can be imagined. I was very much amused by an anecdote he gave us of little Queen Victoria and her nautical organic. Lord Aberdeen has had to attend her in her cruisings very much against his will; or, at least, against his stomach you know he is one of the gravest and most decorous men in the world. The Queen one day undertook to reconcile him to his fate. "I believe my lord, said she graciously, you are not often sea sick." — "Always madam." was the grave reply — "But" said she more graciously: "not very seasick." — with profounder gravity — "very seasick!" Lord

LETTERS OF WASHINGTON IRVING TO HENRY BREVOORT

Birmingham, Jany 29th 1817.

MY DEAR BREVOORT:—

I have your letter of the 21st Nov. which as usual is full of interesting matter about those I most love and care for. How much am I indebted to you for these repeated and persevering acts of friendship. I wish I could give you details equally interesting in return; but in my present monotony of life and almost torpor of intellect it is a matter of difficulty to finish out a letter.

I have made an arrangement with Mess. Longman, Hurst & Co. to furnish me with Books at the same rate they supplied Renwick. The greater part of the old works you wrote for has been sold. They have sent me such as

remained on hand, and a few others that I ordered from a supplementary catalogue. They publish a new catalogue shortly which I shall send you. I must beg your indulgence in retaining a few of these works by me for a little while, as I wish very much to look over them & presume you are not in immediate want of them, but only desire them to complete your library. I shall be very careful of them. Longman & Co. have promised to look out for the other works you ordered, and to send them to me as they come to hand.

Peter passed the Holydays with us and returned to Liverpool about ten days since. He is in excellent health and we enjoyed ourselves highly together in spite of hard times. I am in hopes he will be enabled to come up here again before long, if not I shall pay him a visit in Liverpool. The lady Baroness has enriched her husband with another son, and both mother and child are doing well. We shall have a famous troop of Van Tromps.

They are all uncommonly fine children and a perpetual source of entertainment. We have generally a grand game of romps in the evening, between dinner & tea time, in the course of which I play the flute & the little girls dance. They are but pigmy performers, yet they dance with inimitable grace and vast good will, and consider me as the divinest musician in the world. So thank heavens I have at last found auditors who can appreciate my musical talents.

You wish to know whether in visiting the banks of the Dove I was animated by the recollections of honest old Isaak Walton. I assure you I bless the memory of that illustrious old angler a thousand times for having suggested to me an excursion fraught with the most pleasurable incidents. Among these our ramble thro' Dove Dale was peculiarly delightful. Peter & myself went over there from Matlock. At the last place we had become slightly acquainted with old Bishop

Bathurst of Norwich & his family, Sir Thomas Williams (vice admiral of the Blue) & his lady & a few others, who seemed disposed to be very civil.

It was the good fortune of Peter & myself just after entering Dove Dale, to overtake a party consisting of Sir Thos. Williams & his Lady, the Miss. Bathursts (three lovely girls) & Sir Francis Ford, who is paying attentions to one of the young ladies. They were on a ramble of curiosity like ourselves and had brought provisions with them to make a repast champêtre, that they might be enabled to pass the day in the Dale and return in the evening.

We joined the party and in a few minutes we were all on the most sociable terms. Sir Thomas we found—gentleman Sailor, good humoured, social and interesting—his lady, whom he had married but a year or two before, was much younger than himself, well bred, well informed with a tincture of Chemistry,

Botany & other fashionable studies. The Miss. Bathursts had that delightful frankness & simplicity of manners which I have so often remarked in the really fine women of this country, and Sir Francis Ford, though not the most polished Baronet I have met with, having been brought up at Barbadoes, was amiable, unassuming, and as agreeable as a man utterly in love can be in the presence of his Mistress. If a man could not be happy with such a party in such a place he may give up all hopes of sublunary felicity. For my part I was in Elysium. Nothing so soon banishes reserve and produces intimacy as a participation in difficulties. The path through the Dale was rugged and beset with petty hazard. We had to toil through thickets & brambles—some times to step cautiously from stone to stone in the margin of the little river where the precipitous hills over hung its current—we had to scramble up into caverns and to climb rocks. All these were calculated to place both

parties in those relative situations which endear the sexes. I had woman, lovely woman! clinging to me for assistance & protection—looking up with beseeching weakness & dependence in the midst of difficulties & dangers —while I in all the swelling pride of a lord of the creation, looked upon my feeble companion with an eye of infinite benevolence & fostering care—braved every peril of land & water—and sustained a scratched hand or a wet foot with a fortitude that called forth the admiration of the softer sex!

But all these dangers past—when we had descended from the last precipice & come to where the Dove flowed musically through a verdant meadow—then—fancy me as that "Sweetest of Poets" wandering by the course of this romantic stream—a lovely "girl" hanging on my arm—pointing out the beauties of the surrounding scenery—and repeating in the most dulcet voice tracts of heaven born poetry! If a strawberry smothered in

cream has any consciousness of its delicious situation it must feel as I felt at that moment.

We had proceeded a great distance up the Dale when the day became overcast and a slight shower or two admonished us to return. The showers grew more heavy so that we had to stop occasionally in the caverns of the hills to shelter ourselves. At the last cavern called St. Mary's cave, the rain became heavy & continued. And finding an old woman and her daughter there who had been employed partly as guides & partly to carry the provisions for the repast champêtre, we determined to make our dinner in the cavern. A cloth was spread on the bottom of the cave, and we seated ourselves around on fragments of rock and made a merry banquet. After dinner as the rain continued we had to resort to various amusements to pass away the afternoon. One of the young ladies sang. Sir Thomas Williams sang a whimsical medley—until

the thought struck us to have a dance in the style of Macbeth's witches. We got the girl that had carried the provisions, to sing a country dance which she did with an invincible gravity of countenance and a resounding nasal twang, while we danced a Boulange. We had after this a long dismal Ballad from the country girl, sang in admirable style; and a most frightful story of a Ghost by the old woman, who had seen it "with her own eyes"! Together with several anecdotes of a gang of gypsies that infested the neighbourhood.

The winding up of the adventures of the Dale was, that the rain continuing with unabating violence, and evening approaching we had to abandon the cavern. As the Dale does not admit of the entrance of carriages, having nothing but a foot path winding thro' it, we were obliged to trudge for a mile and half through a steady pitiless, drenching rain so that by the time we reached the carriages

we might have been mistaken for a party of river deities just dripping from the Dove. All parties however were in such high good humour that even the descending torrents could not extinguish or allay our gaiety. Peter was unutterably delighted with the occurrences of the day and begged me to assure you that the ramble about Loch Katrine was "a fool to it"—I rather think however you will not be able to comprehend the pleasures of this memorable ramble in any very lively manner from the brief sketch I have scrawled out. The delights of any party of pleasure of the kind are occasioned by so many little indescribable circumstances, fugitive feelings and temporary excitements, that you may as well attempt to give a deaf man an idea of the chromatic graces and delicate inflexions of a strain of music. I might have expanded my detail of this ramble over the scenes hallowed by honest Walton's simple muse, through a sheet or two more—but I

am always impatient & diffident of these narratives—lest I am only entertaining myself with agreeable recollections, which may be tedious & trifling to those in whom they do not awaken the same associations.

I must conclude this scrawl that it may be forwarded to Liverpool with other letters that are going. I shall write to you in a day or two & give you a list of the Books I have procured.

By the way I wish you to send me by the first private opportunity, or by some Captain of a vessel that knows our house in L'pool—a copy that you have in your possession of "*Style's Judges*"; it is a little old book giving an account of the regicides who took refuge in America. I wish to shew it to an old gentleman here, who has a curiosity on the subject, and will return it carefully to you.

I have rec[d] a letter & Barrel of apples from my good friend Mrs. Bradish & will answer her letter in a day or two. Give my affectionate

remembrances to her & Eliza & the Claypooles if still with you.

Remember me to the household.

Yours ever

W. I.

Liverpool, March 10th 1817.

DEAR BREVOORT:—

By Mr. Selden, who sails in the Nestor I forward you the following works.

Sir Edward Barry on the Wives of the Ancients	1 vol.
The Simple Cobler of Aggawam in America &c.	1 vol.
Cumberland on the first plants of Nations	1 vol.
Conversations on political Economy	1 vol.
Jeremy Taylor's dissuasion from Popery	1 vol.
Hurds dissertations	3 vols.
La Houtan's Voyages	2 vols.
Remains of Sir Walter Raleigh	1 vol.
Raleigh's arts of Empires	1 vol.
History of Patient Grissel—(old pamphlet)	
Virginia impartially examined	1 vol.

Longman & Co· New catalogue

Along with them I send the following works belonging to Col. Gibbs which I wish you to return to him with my thanks, and offers of any services I can render him in Europe.

Sonnini, Voyage dans L'Egypte	3 vols.
Voyage de la Propontide &c	2 vols.
Voyages dans la Syrie	2 vols.
Grece et Turquie	2 vols.
a volume of plates & maps to ditto—	
Constantinople	2 vols.

Besides the books I have forwarded on your account, I have likewise O'Gilvy's America, Hennepins Voyage and Stith's Hist. of Virginia. These three Peter and myself wish to read, and therefore have taken the liberty to detain them a little while. Many of the Books you wrote for had been sold by Longman & Co. previous to my application; but they have promised to look out for them for me. I expect to go up to London this Spring & will

then look round for the books mentioned in your order that are deficient.

I have been in Liverpool a fortnight and have been continually on the point of writing but the wind which has detained the shipping here for nearly two months, having still blown obstinately from the west, I have postponed the thing from day to day. The wind is now getting round and the ships will probably get away in a few hours. I am therefore all in a hurry & have not time to write but this scrawl.

Mercer & Leavenworth are on the point of sailing & will give you all the news & gossip of the day. Mercer has been the very mirror of fashion in Liverpool.

I wrote to you at some length about a month or six weeks since & believe the letter is now on board one of the ships in the harbour. I am my dear Brevoort

Affectionately yours

W. I.

P. S. I wish you to send out any good views, either engravings or drawings that you can procure of *New York* & the adjacent Scenery. Selden will hand you the last Nos of the Edinburgh & Quarterly Revs

Liverpool, March 24th 1817.

MY DEAR BREVOORT:—

Richards informs me that he has written to you requesting your friendly assistance in the investigation and settlements of the concerns of the New York house (Andw Ogden & Co.). He appears very anxious to secure your earnest attention to this business. It will no doubt be a very disagreeable task to you, but when you consider how completely poor Richards' fortunes are in jeopardy—how worthy a fellow he is, and how promptly and liberally he behaved towards yourself when your fortunes depended upon the turn of a die, and when any backwardness on his part would have suffered the golden moment to pass by, I am sure your own good heart will need no further impulse to do everything that lies in your power to promote his interest. I will not therefore dwell on the subject. You will learn from Richards' letters and from conversations with Selden all the particulars of

the case. It is a most cruel one, and that intolerable dolt (for I hope he is no *worse*) And^{w} Ogden, has a vast deal to answer for. I feel most deeply anxious for Richards & Selden. Their acts of kindness to us have been many and momentous & independent of grateful considerations, the fairness, liberality and honourable disposition that had been manifested in all their dealings have ever my strongest regard.

It seems a long time since I last heard from you. The singular perversity of the seasons interrupts the communications of friendship as well as the concerns of business. "The times are sadly out of joint."—I am in hopes as the wind is favourable, there will be an arrival in a day or two that will bring me some intelligence from home. I have been for a month at Liverpool—and count the days as they lag heavily by. Nothing but my wish to be with Peter & relieve the loneliness of his life will induce me to remain an hour in this

place. It is a bustling busy town, but to me a very uninteresting one. I have received attentions from some people who seem both amiable and intelligent; but the good folks here are both too busy & too dissipated to be social, and a stranger who has not business to employ his time will find it a dead weight on his hands.

I have become rather sociable with some of the officers of the 85th, part of which regiment is quartered here, and am highly pleased with them. Among them are Lt. Col. Warburton, whom you may recollect in New York immediately after the peace, and Lt. Col. Brown, who was at the capture of Washington, & was left there among the wounded. Warburton bears honourable testimony to the hospitable treatment he received in New York, and Brown speaks with unaffected warmth & gratitude of the extreme kindness of the people of Washington, who came not withstanding he was one of a band that had laid

waste their homes & spread barbarous destruction around, vied with each other in bestowing the tenderest & most soothing alleviations to his sufferings. He expresses the strongest disapprobation of the excesses committed at the capitol. There is in the regiment also a very fine young fellow, Charles Fox a son of Lord Holland, he has a noble frankness & ingenuousness of disposition & a degree of enthusiasm that I do not often find in the English character. He has been particularly civil to me & has repeatedly expressed a wish that I would take introductory letters to his father & friends when I go to London.

I hope Peter will get through the occupations & entanglements of business sufficiently in the course of a few weeks so as to be enabled to accompany me in some excursion that will enliven & refresh us both & be like turning over a new page in existence,—for life has been but a dull & tedious tale to us both for some time past. I am now & then most heartily

home sick, and once in a great while I feel as if I could almost be sick of the world, if I chose to give way to such weaknesses of the spirit; but these fits are but transient and the result of the life of inactive suspense I have been compelled of late to lead. I never suffer them to get a lodgment in my mind, but shake them resolutely out. In a little while the stream of events will again resume a lively & animating current; in the meantime I shall live on patiently & calmly, being most truly & solemnly convinced that there is a wise & good providence that over rules our destinies and directs everything for the best.

Remember me affectionately to those whom you know I love and believe me my dear Brevoort

Ever most truly yours

W. I.

Liverpool, May 20th 1817.

MY DEAR BREVOORT:—

Mrs. Schmidt and her sister Helen Bache are on the point of embarking for New York. I cannot let them depart without sending you a line, though I have nothing worth communicating. They have revived a thousand recollections of past scenes of innocent pleasure and light-hearted enjoyment. Mrs. Schmidt has given me several anecdotes of you while on a visit at Kinderhook which completely placed you before me. She has a pretty knack at narration, and indeed I have been delighted by the pleasing *naive* manner in which both these little lady travellers recount their adventures and the wonders they have seen. Mrs. Schmidt looks pale and delicate; she is too tender a plant to bear much rough weather. Helen is greatly improved in every respect since I saw her in America. She will no doubt be a belle on her return, and as you are a veteran in the fashionable world I commend

her to your fostering countenance & protection. You can't think how my heart warms at the sight of these lovely little beings associated as they are with home feelings & home recollections. Their sudden appearance in Liverpool has been like an "Angel visit" to me, and like angels they seem to beckon me away to a better world; but sinful mortal that I am, I must still linger behind on this dim spot of earth. I have assisted shewing them the Lions of Liverpool, which they have regarded with the supreme sang-froid of experienced travellers, intimating that they have seen vast deal better things in Germany. Helen Bache takes notes and threatens to eclipse Lady Morgan's France. I beg you will be particular in questioning her about Wrexham Church, Windsor Castle and the rooms at Chester.

I was greatly concerned some short time since at hearing of the death of Mrs. Verplanck. I had previously received very discouraging

accounts of the state of her health but I hoped the climate of France would have restored her. Verplanck was here about a fortnight since and has gone to Scotland. He seemed in good health and tolerable spirits, though thinner than usual. His conversation was quite enlivening to me. He talks of returning to the continent & particularly of revisiting Holland previously to his return home. I feel very anxious for Mrs. Hoffman's health. The repeated trials she is doomed to undergo, must, in spite of her habitual meekness and resignation, prey on her heart and render life utterly joyless. You tell me that Mr. H. suffers from the hardships of the times. I should have thought men in his profession rather likely to benefit by them. I wish he would give up political life,—it is a vile tissue of petty trick & intrigue in the State of New York, & unaccompanied by either honour or real advantage. His business would always ensure him high respectability and abundant support.

LIVERPOOL, MAY 20th 1817

Yesterday dined at Mr. Davidson's for the first time this season; for I have avoided all company as much as possible. Mrs. Davidson shewed me a letter from Mrs. Renwick which presented a perfect picture of her happy household, and also contained some kind remembrances to myself. I wish when you see Mrs. R—— you would give her my most affectionate recollections, and remember me also to James and his Spouse and the rest of that charming family circle. I hope I have yet some happy days in store to be passed among them when the present storms & glooms of adversity have passed away.

God bless you my dear Brevoort.

Your friend

W. I.

P. S. Peter desires to be commended heartily to you.

Birmingham, May 26th 1817.

MY DEAR BREVOORT:—

I forward to you sheets of the greater part of the two first volumes of Campbell's new work, which he had sent to me understanding that I was about to sail for America. He wishes to try if something cannot be procured for them from an American Bookseller. I am sure you will take great pleasure in promoting his interest in this particular; and any emolument that may arrive from the experiment will be of importance to him for I believe his purse is rather light.

He does not seem very sanguine of the result and is willing to abide by any bargain that can be made. He is afraid the work will not appear very tempting to an American Bookseller on the first inspection of the sheets forwarded & that he may not be captivated by the selection from old & almost obsolete authors, which take up the earlier part; but he says the last half of the publication is better

than the present, and not so dry. The whole will be preceded by a dissertation giving an account of all the eminent poets & containing a conspectus of the history of English poetry. This I make no doubt will be a most able and interesting article. This prefatory essay he can send in mss. but nothing else as he makes continual alterations while the work is printing. He will however send out the sheets as fast as they are printed; so that if a Bookseller begins at once to reprint it he will be able to get the work out in America within a week or two of its appearance here.

An advantage to any Bookseller taking this copy should be that should the work come to a second edition Campbell can supply him with additions that would prevent competition.

Eastburn once agreed to share the profits of the first edition with Mr. Campbell, but I presume Eastburn is not publishing at present & not in circumstances to make a good bargain. If Campbell were to furnish additional matter

for the second edition he ought likewise to share the profits of the latter. If you could sell the work out & out for a decent sum down it would be preferable—I have no doubt that Campbell's name & reputation will give the work a run at first, and its merits will render it a *stock book* of regular demand & consequently *good property*. It is therefore well worth the attention of some steady man in the trade. If you make a bargain to share profits take care that it is with some one of this description; in the generality our booksellers are so much on the grasp and the stretch that they never know what their profits are; or if they do, they cannot command money to pay their debts punctually. Should you receive any money for Campbell remit it direct to him at *Sydenham near London*, and you had better communicate direct with him as to any arrangements you may make. Excuse all this trouble which I am giving you my dear fellow, but I know no other channel through

which to promote poor Campbell's interest in America.

I received sometime since your kind letter urging my return—I had even come to the resolution to do so immediately, but the news of my dear mother's death put an end to one strong inducement that was continually tugging at my heart, and other reasons have compelled me to relinquish the idea for the present. I have led a fitful miserable kind of life for a long time past—now & then a little gleam of sunshine to rally up my spirits, but always sure to be followed by redoubled gloom. The cares & sorrows of the world seem thickening upon me and though I battle with them to the utmost & keep up a steady front, yet they would sometimes drag me down. However I do not wish to trouble you with my complainings, and if I do not write to you often, believe me it is not for want of having you constantly in my thoughts, but because I have nothing pleasing to write about. Re-

member me affectionately to all such as take an interest in my welfare. God keep you my dear Brevoort and keep you prosperous & happy.

Yours sin.

Washington Irving.

Liverpool, June 7th 1817.

MY DEAR BREVOORT:—

I have made repeated attempts to reply to your letter of 30th. April but have torn the page to pieces before I had filled it; yet I cannot suffer that letter to lie unacknowledged, for it was a perfect cordial to my feelings.

I have felt the correctness of your advice that I should return home & had prepared to do so, but troubles have thickened upon us & I cannot leave Peter to buffet them alone. I do not pretend to render any active assistance. I have long been utterly passive in respect to business; but my company is of importance to keep up his spirits in these trying times. Do not imagine I suffer myself to be broken down and unmanned by complicated evils. I have made up my mind to them & indeed grown familiar with them by dismal anticipation. As you observe it is useless to attempt to "patch up grief with musty proverbs"; there is a nothingness in all

verbal consolation & sympathy. The heart is competent to digest its own sorrows.— Your letter gave the true kind of consolation; it filled my mind with agreeable ideas of distant friends, and home scenes, where I yet hope to find some pleasure in existence. You have furnished me with quite a train of pleasing meditations and diverted my thoughts from my own dreary situation.

I am happy to find, by the account you give of my lovely friend Mrs. Campbell, that she has recovered from the shock her spirits must have received from her father's death. It is singular that I had been dreaming of her the very night before I received your letter, and had fancied myself taking a long ramble with her in which she had said a thousand witty & agreeable things, not one of which, as usual, I could recollect on waking. When next you see her, tell her I am infinitely gratified by her friendly recollection. I do not remember the circumstances you allude to of

a veto against the story of Jessy Marvin, but it could not help being good as she was concerned in it. I dare say it was some joke at my expense, and I always take care to forget such jokes as soon as possible.

The marriage of Serena L—— is in the best style of modern romance. I hope the Colonel is as amiable in the parlour as he is gallant in the field; if so, he is the very man for her. I should not have liked to hear of her marrying some commonplaced counting house gentleman.

I have had a very friendly message from Jack Nicholson, through one of his relations resident in Liverpool, & am glad to hear the worthy little Tar is promoted to a Captaincy. He writes that he does not despair of commanding a *seventy four* before he dies; but I rather think Jack was speaking in parables as he must have been about that time opening his batteries upon the younger Miss Nevison who Frank Ogden tells me is "about *six*

feet high." Jack had always too great a heart for his little body.

Moore's new poem is just out. I have not sent it to you, for it is dear and worthless. It is written in the most effeminate taste & fit only to delight boarding school girls and lads of nineteen, just in their first loves. Moore should have kept to songs & epigrammatic conceits. His stream of intellect is too small to bear expansion, it spreads into mere surface.

Mr. & Mrs. Derby have been two or three days in Liverpool but I have not seen them. Indeed I am living like a hermit, passing my time entirely at home, excepting now and then I take a walk out of town for exercise, or pay a visit to Peter Ogden who is in our neighbourhood, and is confined to the house by indisposition. This is a singular contrast to the life I once led, but one gets accustomed to everything, and I feel perfectly contented to keep out of sight of the world, & indeed have at present no relish for society.

Such a mode of life affords scanty material for letter writing, and you must excuse me for being very dull. Indeed I had no idea of getting through this letter as well as I have when I commenced.

Remember me affectionately to Mrs. Renwick & her family, to Mrs. Bradish & the girls and to my worthy friend the Governor who I hope still reigns undisturbed over the Colony.

God bless you my dear Brevoort.

Affectionately yours

W. I.

Liverpool, June 11th 1817.

MY DEAR BREVOORT:—

I have forwarded you to collect on behalf of Mr. Muncaster, Bookseller, a bill of Exchg. drawn by our house in his favour, on Moses Thomas for books sent the latter. It was the only mode that presented of closing this a/c with the Bookseller; as we did not wish such a petty a/c to be unpaid. I wish you would be accommodating to Thomas in settling it; but he has been remiss in remitting to us in advance, or such an a/c would not have accumulated. It is thus one always gets in petty scrapes by trying to serve others.

VanWart has called a meeting of his creditors on the 23rd inst. They are friendly in their dispositions towards him, & I hope he will get favourable terms.

I write in haste—Peter is well and so am I, which is as much as can be expected in these hard times. Your friend

W. I.

LIVERPOOL, JUNE 11th 1817

Liverpool, June 11th 1817.

DEAR BREVOORT:—

We have drawn on Mr. Moses Thomas of Philadelphia, in favor of Mr. Thomas Muncaster, Bookseller, Church St., Liverpool, for Books forwarded at various times to Mr. Thomas. As Mr. Muncaster has no correspondent in America, you will do me a favour in collecting the amount of the Bill for him, and forwarding it to his address as above.

Your friend

WASHINGTON IRVING.

P. S. Mr. Muncaster has procured most of the works I formerly sent to you and should you have any further command of this kind I would recommend him to a continuance of your favours.

LIVERPOOL, JUNE 21st 1817

Liverpool, June 21st 1817.

MY DEAR BREVOORT:—

Mr. Coles, late Secretary of Mr. Madison, is passenger in the Tea Plant & has numbers of the Edinburgh Review for you. I believe you are acquainted with him; if not I hope you will become so as he is a very worthy fellow.—Peter and myself are in good health.

God Bless you—

W. I.

P. S. I believe I some time since requested you to procure me some Books &c. You need not do so, as I shall not have money to repay you. I hope however you have sent me Styles' Judges.

LIVERPOOL, JULY 11th 1817

Liverpool, July 11th 1817.

MY DEAR BREVOORT:—

Your letter of June 11th has remained for several days unanswered, though I have made many attempts at a reply. I find it almost impossible under the present circumstances to write letters; but your kind inquiries spring from too friendly a feeling to be disregarded.

I have no intention of returning home for a year at least. I am waiting to extricate myself from the ruins of our unfortunate concern after which I shall turn my back upon this scene of care & distress, and shall pass a considerable part of my time in London. I have a plan which, with very little trouble, will yield me for the present a scanty but sufficient means of support, and leave me leisure to look round for something better. I cannot at present explain to you what it is—you would probably consider it precarious, & inadequate to my subsistence—but a small matter will float a drowning man and I have

dwelt so much of late on the prospect of being cast homeless & pennyless upon the world; that I feel relieved in having even a straw to catch at.

I have weighed every thing *pro and con* on the subject of returning home and have for the present abandoned the idea. My affections would at once prompt me to return, but in doing so, would they insure me any happiness? Would they not on the contrary be productive of misery? I should find those I love & whom I had left prosperous—struggling with adversity without my being able to yield them comfort or assistance. Every scene of past enjoyment would be a cause of regret and discontent. I should have no immediate mode of support & should be perhaps a bother to my friends who have claims enough on their sympathy & exertions. No—no. If I must scuffle with poverty let me do it out of sight—where I am but little known—where I cannot even contrast present penury

with former affluence. In this country I have a plan for immediate support—it may lead to something better—at any rate it places me for the time above the horrors of destitution or the more galling mortifications of dependence.

Besides I am accustomed & reconciled to the features of adversity in this country; but were I to return to America I should find it under a new face and have to go through something of what I have already experienced, to get on similar terms of familiarity.

I hope I have now given you sufficient reason for my remaining abroad. My mind is made up to it: & though now and then, when I get letters from home, particularly yours, which paint home scenes so vividly, I feel my heart yearning towards New York with almost a sickly longing, yet I am convinced I am acting for the best.

I wish circumstances would induce you to come out to Europe. You talk of visiting

Canada—why not cross the Atlantic? The obstacles are merely ideal. Three weeks would land you in England—a profit might be combined with the visit. But I don't wish to hold out temptations that may lead to evil.

Remember me affectionately to such of my friends as inquire after me, and if any complain of my not writing to them, tell them I have lost the art.

God Bless you my dear Brevoort.

Your friend

W. I.

Liverpool, July 21st 1817.

DEAR BREVOORT:—

Sometime since I forwarded to you our Bill on Moses Thomas for *70* £ Stg. in favour of Mr. Thomas Muncaster, with a request that you would collect it and forward the proceeds to Muncaster. This was for the purpose of securing a debt to the latter for books purchased for Thomas. We have lately received a remittance from Thomas of *100*£. Should therefore our Draft on him have been presented & accepted, you need not present it for payt but cancel it & return it to us.

By Mr. M. Evers, who sails in the Anna Maria, I send you a collection of discoveries &c. in Africa.

I write in haste as the bag is about to be taken away in which this letter goes.

Your friend

W. I.

Edinburgh, August 28th 1817.

MY DEAR BREVOORT:

I received your letter of July 2d a few days since, while in London, but had not time to answer it from there, and I now am in such a hurry of mind and body that I can scarce collect my thoughts & settle myself down long enough to write. I was in London for about three weeks, when the town was quite deserted. I found however sufficient objects of curiosity & interest to keep me in a worry; and amused myself by exploring various parts of the City; which in the dirt and gloom of winter would be almost impossible. I passed a day with Campbell at Sydenham. He is still simmering on his biographical & critical labours and has promised to forward more letter press to you. He says he will bring it out the coming autumn. He has now been taxing his brain with this cursed work some years, a most lamentable waste of time and poetic talent. Campbell seems to have an inclination to pay

America a visit, having a great desire to see the country, and to visit his brother, whom he has not seen for many years. The expense however is a complete obstacle. I think he might easily be induced to cross the seas, and his visit made a very advantageous one to our Country. He has twelve lectures written out, on Poetry & Belles Letters, which he has delivered with great applause to the most brilliant London audiences. I believe you have heard one or two of them. They are highly spoken of by the best judges. Now could not subscription lists be set on foot in New York and Philadelphia, among the first classes of people, for a course of Lectures in each City and when a sufficient number of names are procured to make it an object, the lists sent to Campbell with an invitation to come over and deliver the lectures? It would be highly complimentary to him, would at once remove all pecuniary difficulties and if he accepted the invitation his lectures would have a great ef-

fect in giving an impulse to American literature and a proper direction to the public taste. Say the subscription was $10 for the course of lectures—I should think it an easy matter to fill up a large list at that rate, for how many are there in New York who would give that price to hear a course of lectures on Belles Letters from one of the first Poets of Great Britain? I sounded Campbell on the subject and have no doubt that he would accept such an invitation. Speak to Renwick on the subject and if you will take it in hand I am sure it will succeed. Charles King would no doubt promote a thing of this kind, and Dr. Hosack would be delighted to give his assistance, and would be a most efficient aid.

While at London I made the acquaintance of Murray the Bookseller, who you know is a most valuable acquaintance to a stranger, as by his means considerable access is gained to the literary world. I dined with him and met among two or three rather interesting char-

acters, old D'Israeli, with whom I was much entertained. He is a cheerful, social old gentleman, full of talk and anecdote. He was curious about America and seemed much pleased with the idea of his works being reprinted and circulated there. I saw two or three of the Lions of the Quarterly Review in Murray's den, but almost all the literary people are out of town; and those that have not the means of travelling lurk in their garrets and affect to be in the country; for you know these poor devils have a great desire to be thought fashionable. I have no doubt I shall find Murray's den a great source of gratification when I return to London. Ogilvie was at London and had just finished a short course of his exhibitions. He had lectured in Freemasons Hall. His lectures had been very well attended considering the season; his audiences applauded and the papers speak well of him. I did not hear any of his orations in London and cannot tell how his success was promoted

by the exertions of American and Scotch friends. He however seems to be very well satisfied and has gone to Cheltenham. He intends to deliver orations at a few of the provincial towns and return to London toward winter. I have not time to detail more particulars of London gossip. I left there on the 25th inst. in a packet for Berwick on Tweed, having some occasion to visit Edinburgh & intending to make a short excursion into the Highlands. I found myself among a motley, but characteristic assemblage of passengers. All Scotch and some of them fit studies for Walter Scott. The first part of the voyage was tedious; head winds & bad weather, the latter part however was delightful. I am always in high health & spirits at sea and I cannot express to you how much I was excited when we came on the coast of Northumberland so gloriously sketched off in the second canto of Marmion.

We had a smacking breeze and dashed

gallantly through the waters. We passed by "Dunkanborough's caverned shore" and saw the old Castle of that name seated on a rocky eminence, but half shrouded in morning mist. The day brightened up as we approached Bamborough Castle, which stands in stern and lordly solitude on the sea coast—Scott's description of it is very poetical but accurate.

> Thy town proud Bamborough, marked
> they these
> King Idas castle, huge and square,
> From its tall rock look grimly down
> And on the swelling ocean frown.

We sailed close by this old ruin and then skirted the Holy isle, where Scott lays the scene of Constance de Beverly's trial and above the remains of St. Cuthberts monastery are still visible. You may imagine the excitement of my feelings in this romantic part of my voyage. I landed at Berwick after being four days on the water, and having satisfied my curiosity with this old and celebrated

place, I took coach & rattled off for Edinburgh —and here I am.

This place surpasses my utmost expectations, in regards to its situation and appearance. I think it the most picturesque romantic place I have ever seen except Naples.

I had several letters of introduction but almost everybody is out of town, Mrs. Fletcher and her family are in the Highlands and rather secluded—about four months since they had the misfortune to lose her first daughter (Grace) by a typhus fever.

The day before yesterday I dined with Mrs. Renwick's brother, Mr. Jeffrey, who has been extremely attentive to me. I was very much pleased with him and his family. Mrs. Jeffrey is a very pleasant woman & they have a fine family of children. I left a card the same day at Mr. Francis Jeffrey's (the Reviewer) house. His family are about 3 miles off in the country. He called on me yesterday and invited me to dine with him en famille.

I accordingly footed it out to his little castle yesterday in company with his brother John Jeffrey. He has leased for thirty-two years, an old castelated mansion, situated at the foot of a beautiful romantic range of hills, and in a perfect seclusion though but three miles from Edinburgh. He has made considerable additions & alterations, is ornamenting his grounds with great taste, and has altogether one of the most picturesque poetical little domains that the heart of an author would desire. I passed a most agreeable afternoon; my reception was frank, cordial & hospitable and I found Jeffrey an amiable & pleasant man in his own house. I never saw him to such advantage before. Mrs. Jeffrey looks thin & nervous; but is in good spirits, and seems happy, and I think has reasons to be so. They have a charming little daughter of whom Jeffrey seems both fond and proud. I am to dine there again to-day—when I am to meet Dugald Stewart, who, most luck-

ily for me, happens just now on a visit to Edinburgh.

I shall also meet Madame LaVoisin, late Comtesse de Rumford and the Lady of Sir Humphrey Davy formerly Mrs. Aprecel.

Sept. 6th. I must scrawl a conclusion to this letter as fast as possible as I am very much pressed for time. I dined at Jeffreys the day mentioned; but was disappointed in meeting Mr. Stewart; he was detained home by indisposition. His wife and daughter were there and we had a large party among whom were also Lord Webb Seymour, whom you may have met as he resides almost continually at Edinburgh. He is brother to the Duke of Somerset, and is a very agreeable unaffected well informed man. Also Mr. Murray an advocate of Edinburgh and one of the writers for the review & several others. Lady Davy talked at a great rate and in charming style—I was very much pleased with her. But allons—the next day I set off for Wilson and reached

Selkirk that evening from whence on Saturday morning early I take chaise for the Abbey.

On my way I stopped at the gate of Abbotsford & sent in my letter of introduction to Walter Scott, with a card & request to know whether it would be possible for him to receive a visit from me in the course of the day. Mr. Scott himself came out to see me and welcomed me to his home with the genuine hospitality of the olden-times. In a moment I found myself at his breakfast table, and felt as if I was at the social board of an old friend. Instead of a visit of a few hours I was kept there several days—and such days! You know the charms of Scott's conversation but you have not lived with him in the country—you have not rambled with him about his favorite hills and glens and burns—you have not seen him dispensing happiness around him in his little rural domain. I came prepared to admire him, but he completely won my heart and made me love him. He has a charming family around

him—Sophia Scott who must have been quite a little girl when you were here, is grown up, and is a sweet little mountain lassie. She partakes a great deal of her father's character—is light-hearted ingenuous, intelligent, and amiable. Can tell a whimsical story and sing a border song with the most captivating naivete.

Scott was very attentive in showing me the neighboring country. I was with him from morning to night and was constantly astonished and delighted by the perpetual and varied flow of his conversation. It is just as entertaining as one of his novels, and exactly like them in style, point, humour, character & picturesqueness. I parted with him with the utmost regret but received a cordial invitation to repeat my visit on my way back to England, which I think I shall do. I should not forget to mention that he spoke of you in the most friendly terms; and reproached himself for not having written to you; but says he is extremely remiss in letter writing.

EDINBURGH, AUGUST 28th 1817

Since my return to Edinburgh I have dined with Constable the Bookseller, whom I met with Professor Leslie.

Little Blackwood the Bookseller speaks of you with great regard. He says he shall send you the number of a new monthly magazine which he is publishing and which possesses considerable merit. I must conclude, as I have to hurry to Court to hear Jeffrey plead and must make preparations for a short excursion to the highlands.

God bless you.

Your friend

W. I.

P. S. I have received a letter from Carey informing me of the arrangement with Eastburn for Campbell's works; which is very satisfactory. Remember me to all friends—I have heard you repeatedly spoken of in Edinburgh with the highest regard.

Liverpool, Oct. 10th 1817.

MY DEAR BREVOORT:—

I have received your letter of Aug. 20th, and congratulate you most heartily on the happy change you are about to make in your situation. I had heard rumours of the affair before I received your letters, and my account represented the Lady of your choice exactly such an one as your best friend could have wished for. I am almost ashamed to say that at first the news had rather the effect of making me feel melancholy than glad. It seemed in a manner to divorce us forever; for marriage is the grave of bachelors' intimacy, and after having lived & grown together for many years, so that our habits, thoughts & feelings were quite banded & intertwined, a separation of this kind is a serious matter—not so much to you, who are transplanted into the garden of matrimony, to flourish and fructify and be caressed into prosperity,—but for poor me, left lonely and forlorn, and

blasted by every wind of heaven.—However, I don't mean to indulge in lamentations on the occasion. Though this unknown piece of perfection has completely escaped my plan, I bear her no jealousy or ill will; but hope you may long live happily together and that she may prove as constant & faithful to you as I have been.—Indeed I already feel a regard for her, on your account, and have no doubt I shall at some future day feel a still stronger one on her own.

I am writing hastily with a mind occupied by various concerns, and in a hurried moment which must account for the insufficiency of this scrawl. I have written to Campbell on the subject of his work.—I had expected long since to have received further portions from him but he is a dilatory being and is simmering over this work like an old woman over a pipkin. I am glad Eastburn did not begin to print, as I perceive there is no depending on Campbell's promptness.—I shall transmit the work as

fast as I receive it. I feel gratified by the execution my friends are making to get me the situation in London, though I doubt their success. These places are generally given to political favourites. I merely wanted such a situation for a little while. I have no desire to remain long in Europe still while I am here, I should like to be placed on good ground and look around me advantageously. A situation of the kind would have that effect, and would enable me to return home at a proper season, and under favourable circumstances; not to be driven to my native shores like a mere wreck.

The letter enclosed from Smedley & Co. to P. E. Irving & Co. has been forwarded to them and acknowledged & have drawn on them for 60£ of which P & E I & Co are regularly advised.

I must again apologize to you my dear Brevoort for this miserable scrawl but I am excessively hurried.

Give my love to all the good beings around you—and to your *wife* too, if by this time you are married and believe me, as ever

Affectionately yours

W. I.

Liverpool, Jan. 28th 1818.

MY DEAR BREVOORT:—

I have not written to you for some time past for in fact the monotonous life I lead, being passed almost continually within doors, leaves me little to communicate. I have just written to Campbell, stating the contents of your letter of Dec. 4th, and shall let you know his reply the moment I receive it.

I enclose a reply to the kind letter of Mrs. B. but it expresses nothing of what I feel. How happy a period of my life it will be when I once more return home and feel myself among true friends. But I cannot bring myself to think of returning home under present circumstances.

We are now in train to pass through the Bankrupt Act. It is a humiliating alternative but my mind is made up to any thing that will extricate me from this loathsome entanglement in which I have so long been involved—I am eager to get from under this murky

cloud before it completely withers & blights me. For upward of two years have I been bowed down in spirit and harassed by the most sordid cares—a much longer continuance of such a situation would indeed be my ruin. As yet I trust my mind has not lost its elasticity, and I hope to recover some cheerful standing in the world. Indeed I feel very little solicitude about my own prospects—I trust something will turn up to promise me subsistence & am convinced, however scanty & precarious may be my lot I can bring myself to be content. But I feel harassed in mind at times on behalf of my brothers. It is a dismal thing to look round on the wrecks of such a family connexion. This is what, in spite of every exertion, will some times steep my very soul in bitterness. Above all, the situation of my poor brother Ebenezer and his family distresses me. My dear Brevoort, whatever friendship you feel for me, never trouble yourself on my account, but lend a

helping hand, when he is extricated from present difficulties, once more to put him in a way to get forward. He is a capable & indefatigable man of business & in a regular line cannot but make out well. His ruin has been occasioned by circumstances over which he had no control. Do not suppose I am wishing you to jeopard your own interests in the least—but the mere advice and countenance of two or three prosperous men to one in his situation have the most reviving effect. Once get him under way, and he has a cheerful perseverance & steady application that will carry him regularly forward.

Excuse me writing on these irksome subjects—I had determined not to do so any more, but they are upper most in my thoughts and will some time find their way to my pen.

In the course of two or three months I hope to have finally got through difficulties here, and to close this gloomy page of existence—what the next will be that I shall turn over, is

all uncertainty; but I trust in a kind providence that shapes all things for the best, and yet I hope to find future good springing out of these present adversities.

I am my dear Brevoort

Affectionately yours

W. I.

Liverpool, March 22d 1818.

MY DEAR BREVOORT:—

If you have not already done so I wish you to remit by the first opportunity to Mess. A. & S. Richards the amount of the Draft paid you by Moses Thomas some time since, I think it was about 70£ Sterling. It was to pay for Books purchased for him, and I have had to borrow of Richards for that purpose. You can tell A. & S. Richards that the money is to be on my account subject to my orders.

I now inclose you a draft on Mr. Thomas for five hundred dollars, which I will thank you to collect. You need not put it in circulation, but account privately with Mr. Thomas for it. I shall draw on you, (probably in favour of A. & S. Richards), as my current expenses require and you may depend on my putting you in funds either by drafts on Mr. Thomas, or in some other way.

I will write in reply to your letter from

Charlestown at a moment of more leisure—this is merely on business.

Yours ever

W. Irving.

LIVERPOOL, APRIL 30th 1818

Liverpool, April 30-- 1818.

MY DEAR BREVOORT:—

Your letter of the 8th March, was handed me by the Messrs Gibbes, with whom I was very much pleased. They have just left this for London, and gone direct, as fast as coach can carry them; though I urged them almost with tears in my eyes to go by the way of Chester, Shrewsbury, &c &c and to travel leisurely. The weather is heavenly and the country is just breaking out into all the loveliness of Spring—but they were bitten with the travellers' most fatal malady, the eagerness to *get on*—and so away they have gone pell mell for London, where I should almost rejoice to hear they were well besmoked and befogged for their flight of the charms of dame nature.

Your letter most unluckily reached me the very afternoon of the day on which MacGillivray sailed for New York. I did not see him while he was here; and am at a loss to know whether he purchased the Harp for

Mrs. Brevoort or not. I shall make inquiry when I go to London; but wish you would write me word at all events whether he has or not—and whether I shall from time to time send Mrs. Brevoort some *choice Musick*, for the Musick that is generally sent out to America is commonplace Sing Song. I hope MacGillivray has not got the Harp, for I think I have means of getting her a very choice one, through the judgment of one of the first Harpplayers in England. There is great choice in the article. You will smile to find me talking knowingly of Musick—but I have become a little of a dabbler. As one mode of battling with the foul fiend during the long and gloomy trial I have undergone I took hold of my flute again and put myself under the tutorship of a master; and now begin to know one end of the instrument from the other.—I found the prescription excellent at times when I could not read and dared not think and thus have extracted some

little sweet out of the bitterness of adversity. An application from Mrs. B. for Musick therefore is not more out of my way than yours for Books, and I shall be glad at any time to execute a commission for either of you to the best of my powers.

I shall go to London before long and shall then attend to your request about books—prints &c.

A few days since Peter & myself attended the wedding of Joseph Curwen whom you may recollect as one of the Club of Philadelphia and who has married Miss Selina Gadsden of Charlestown—a lady acquainted with your wife and who has given me many interesting particulars concerning her.—She is a charming woman & will be quite an addition to the American society in Liverpool.

We are waiting here for the final settlement of our concerns; our certificates are going the round for Signature after which Peter will sail for New York—I intend remaining some time

longer in England. I have received no answer from Campbell in reply to a letter I wrote him on the receipt of yours. I am surprised at his silence, but it is possible he is a little perplexed, and defers talking on the subject until he comes to Liverpool, which will be shortly, to deliver a course of lectures at the Liverpool Institution.

I have several letters to write by this opportunity and must be brief. Give my best remembrances to Mrs. B. and believe me my dear Brevoort

Affectionately yours

W. I.

LIVERPOOL, MAY 1st 1818

Liverpool, May 1st 1818.

DEAR BREVOORT:—

I some time since enclosed you a draft on Mr. Thomas for five hundred Dollars; I have this day drawn on you at three months after date for a like amount favour of Messr. A. & S. Richards—I may hereafter draw on you in same way, as it is the most convenient way for me to draw funds from America. I shall always take care to replace any funds I may draw out of your hand without delay—if I do not have them placed there in advance.

I wrote to you some time since likewise to remit to A. & S. Richards the money paid to you by Mr. Thomas last year for his draft. I have had to borrow money of Richards on the presumption that such amount was on the way.

Yours truly

W. I.

Liverpool, May 19th 1818.

DEAR BREVOORT:—

I have before written to you on the subject of the amount of a draft on Moses Thomas, paid to you some time last year. I find this unlucky little lump of money is undergoing detention in your hands in consequence of some overcaution of my brother Ebenz who is either afraid I will be extravagant on the receipt of such a sum or that the ship will sink under the weight of it. If you have not remitted it before the receipt of this, to Silas Richards, do so at once. I have had to borrow from Richards the amount of it to pay for Books sent to Mr. Thomas.

I am happy to inform you that we have had our certificates duly signed and they have only now to go through the Lord Chancellor's hands. It has been a tedious business owing to the scattered residences of our creditors, and to the wrong-headedness of some of them —and as is often the case in matters of the kind

—we have almost invariably met with delay and perversity when we had every reason to expect the reverse.

It will take a little while to settle all matters here and get the necessary papers for my brother Eben^{z} discharge, after which Peter will set sail for New York—I hardly think he will get away before the first of July.

The last letters from home mention you as being in New York *en Garçon!* I presume you are building your nest like other happy birds, in the Spring time.

I have already acknowledged your letter containing a request about the Harp &c. The departure of Mr. MacGillivray on the very morning of the day wherein I received the letter without my seeing him has left me completely in the dark whether he has bought the Harp or not.

I had a long letter from James Paulding some days since. He appears to be delightfully and happily situated at Washington:

but mentions that his health is very delicate. I declare the receipt of this letter has been one of the most pleasing circumstances that I have met with for a long time. It brought back so many recollections of our old literary communions and was written in one of James' most warm hearted moments.

I received a letter from Campbell a few days since wherein he apologizes for not having answered my letter before—the subject of a visit to America—in consequence of a severe fit of illness. I am sorry to say he relinquishes the thing altogether, alledging that he is "too old." I must confess I had lost almost all expectation of his going out, for he seems to want nerve and enterprize.

I have nothing further to tell you of news. I have little to say of myself, my time passing with great uniformity, being spent chiefly within doors. I have been some time past engaged in the study of the German Language, and have got on so far as to be able to read

and *splutter* a little. It is a severe task, and has required hard study; but the rich mine of German Literature holds forth abundant reward. Give my best regards to Mrs. B. and believe me my dear fellow

Yours ever

W. I.

Liverpool, May 23d 1818.

MY DEAR BREVOORT:—

I enclose you a draft at sixty days sight for Five hundred Dollars on Moses Thomas, Philadelphia, which I will thank you to present for acceptance. I have this day likewise drawn on you for a like amount at four months date in favour of Silas Richards Esq.

I would observe that no draft I have drawn on you has any relation to a bill drawn on you for Mr. Muncaster on Mr. Thomas and collected by you last year. I have already desired you to remit the proceeds of that bill to Mr. Richards for my account, as I had to borrow the amount of him.

Affectionately yours

WASHINGTON IRVING.

Leamington, July 7th 1818.

MY DEAR BREVOORT:—

It is a long while since I have heard from you, and though I know you must be taken up with the cares and comforts and enjoyments of Matrimony, and the novelties of housekeeping and domestic establishments, yet I cannot consent to be so completely forgotten. I don't mean to complain for I know it is the nature of things and what we poor Bachelors must make our minds up to—but only do the thing decently and let me down as easy as possible. I wrote to you some time last winter enclosing a reply to Mrs. B's. kind letter—you have never acknowledged the receipt of that letter—I hope it arrived safe and that you did not in some sudden *fit of jealousy* suppress our correspondence. I am delighted to hear that you have established yourself in the country adjoining to Mrs. Renwick's—how charmingly you must live, with such a delightful circle.

I wrote to Gouverneur Kemble a long time since but have received no reply. I hope he is doing well at the Foundry.

I am here with my sister Mrs. Van Wart, whose health has suffered of late, but she is now getting quite well again. Van Wart has resumed business in a prosperous style—and I have no doubt of his going on well and ultimately building up a fortune.

I drew two sets of Exchg. on you, each for *500*$ some time since against similar draft on Mr. Thomas forwarded to you for collection. I have heard nothing on the subject but hope this has been honoured—as I depend upon them for ways & means. I shall not trouble you again in that way—as it must be a little out of your way of business but at the time I drew the bill there was no other convenient mode presented itself.

I wish I had something to write about or was in a mood to write something worth reading—but—wretched as this scrawl is, it

is the best my intellect can furnish out. Accept it therefore as a mere testimony of constant recollections. Give my sincere regards to Mrs. B. and to such of our friends as still think or care about me and believe me as ever

Affectionately yours

W. I.

LONDON, SEPTEMBER 23d 1818

London, Sept. 23d 1818.

MY DEAR BREVOORT:—

Permit me to introduce to you Mr. Bartley, late of Drury Lane Theatre, who with Mrs. Bartley is about to make a Tour in the United States. As you have seen the performances of Mrs. Bartley I need say nothing on the subject—except that I consider her visit to America as a most gratifying event to the Lovers of the Drama. The private character & deportment of Mr. & Mrs. Bartley have been such as to secure them the most flattering reception in the best circles of this country, and I feel very solicitous that they should receive similar advantages in America. Permit me therefore to commend them to your attentions and to request that you will interest yourself to make their stay among you both agreeable and advantageous.

Your friend

WASHINGTON IRVING.

LONDON, SEPTEMBER 27th 1818

London, Sept. 27th 1818.

MY DEAR BREVOORT:—

It is some time since I received your letter of July 21: but I am so little in the vein of letter writing now adays that I find myself continually procrastinating. Your letter cheered a dull & lonely hour and made me feel for a little while quite at home and among friends again. I wish you joy of your Son, and hope and trust he will add greatly to the stock of domestic enjoyments that seem continually augmenting around you. Give my congratulations to Mrs. Brevoort on the occasion, if it has not grown too old a story by the time this letter arrives.

I have been in London for about six weeks, and shall make it most probably my headquarters while I remain in England. My health has been but indifferent this summer, having been nervous and debilitated which produced at times great depression of spirits. As the weather grows cool however, I feel

myself reviving and hope soon to be myself again.

I believe I mentioned to you in a former letter that I had met with Ogilvie in England. He is now in London and is preparing for another attempt at oratorical display in the Metropolis. He was very successful in Scotland, but has never had a fair chance at the London folks. I think his success here very problematical, though vastly his inferiors have succeeded; but there is great caprice in public taste in London. By the death of a relative he has fallen heir to a little family estate called Dunnydeen, which is sufficient for all his moderate wants. I see him frequently, and am more convinced than ever of the pureness of his intentions, and goodness of his heart. He is quite a visionary but a most interesting one.

You mention that the Booksellers are wanting a new Edition of Knickerbocker. I have been preparing one and am only waiting to

get two plates printed to send it out to Moses Thomas for publication. The two plates are excellent engravings from two drawings, by Leslie and Allston. The pictures have great merit. I have ordered two or three hundred proofs of each to be struck off in case any person might be inclined to purchase them for framing as specimens of Allston's & Leslie's abilities. I wish to cover the expenses as far as possible. They have cost a considerable sum —at least considerable to my slender purse. I hope this new edition will bring me in a little money soon or my purse will soon be empty.

I have drawn on Moses Thomas for *three hundred dollars*, in your favour, to pay off a Bookseller's account for Books sent him. I had not intended to trouble you again in this way—but I did not know whether my Brother William would be in town.

Can I be of any service to you in buying Books, as I shall probably be some time in London.

Remember me to such of my friends as seem to care any thing about me and give my sincere regards to your better half.

I am my dear Brevoort—as ever

Affectionately Yours

W. I.

P. S. I have given Mr. Bartley of Drury Lane a letter of introduction to you—Mrs. Bartley I am told is a fine intelligent woman and I thought you would feel an interest in knowing her. I enclose first of Exchg. on Moses Thomas at 60 days sight for 300$ favour of H. Brevoort Jr.

LONDON, OCTOBER 16th 1818

London, Oct. 16th 1818.

MY DEAR BREVOORT:—

I have this day drawn on you at ninety days date in favour of Mess. A. & S. Richards for Three Hundred Dollars. It is against a draft which I lately sent you, on Moses Thomas for a like amount at sixty days sight.

I am writing in extreme haste that my letter may go by a parcel which is making up.

Yours affectionately

W. I.

London, March 3d 1819.

MY DEAR BREVOORT:—

I have this moment received your letter of Febr 2d which came most opportunely, as it shewed the impossibility of my relying further on poor Thomas in literary matters, and I was on the point of commencing further operations with him. He is a worthy honest fellow, but apt to entangle himself. Were I a rich man I would give him my writings for nothing—as I am a very poor one, I must take care of myself.

I have just sent to my brother Ebenr Mss: for the first number of a work which if successful I hope to continue occasionally. I had wished him to send it to Thomas for publication; but I now must have it published by some one else. Will you, as you are a literary man and a man of leisure, take it under your care. I wish the copy right secured for me, and the work printed, and then sold to one or more booksellers, who will

take the whole impression at a fair discount & give cash or good notes for it. This makes short work of it and is more profitable to the author than selling the copy right. I should like Thomas to have the first offer—as he has been and is a true friend to me & I wish him to have any advantage that may arise from the publication of it.

If the work is printed in N York will you correct the proof sheets, as I fear the Mss: will be obscure & occasionally incorrect, & you are well acquainted with my handwriting.

I feel great diffidence about this re-appearance in literature. I am conscious of my imperfections—and my mind has been for a long time past so preyed upon and agitated by various cares and anxieties, that I fear it has lost much of its cheerfulness and some of its activity.

I have attempted no lofty theme nor sought to look wise and learned, which appears to be very much the fashion among our American

writers at present. I have preferred addressing myself to the feeling & fancy of the reader, more than to his judgment. My writings may appear therefore light & trifling in our country of philosophers & politicians—but if they possess merit in the class of literature to which they belong it is all to which I aspire in the work. I seek only to blow a flute of accompaniment in the national concert, and leave others to play the fiddle & French horn.

I shall endeavour to follow this first number by a second as soon as possible, but some time may intervene—for my writing moods are very precarious, and I have been rendered excessively nervous by the kind of life I have led for some time past.

Your request that I should draw on you when in want of money is one of the many gratifying proofs of friendship which I have received from you. Indeed the offer is a most acceptable one; for I have been much annoyed

by the idea of running short of funds, and was determined not to ask for any in advance. I can draw on you with confidence, as you will receive the proceeds of my writings, which I hope will more than cover my drafts. The supply of cash will enable me to go over to the continent by & bye, where I wish to visit a few places before I return to America. I may therefore draw on you in the course of a few weeks, for 1000$—especially if I feel confidence in the prosecution of my work. If I can get my mind into full play, and dash off a set of writings that may do me credit; I shall return home with alacrity, and it will hasten my return—but I cannot bear the thoughts of limping home broken down & spiritless, to be received kindly in remembrance of former services.

I wish you to keep the contents of this letter to yourself; say nothing of my Mss: and dont let any one see it before printed—I dread awakening expectations.

Give my most affectionate regards to your wife, whom I love for your sake as well as her own. The misfortune of the Renwicks gave me some dismal feelings—it seemed as if another little region of my happiness was laid waste—and thus piece by piece the whole home scene I had left behind was becoming desolate. Give them my best wishes & remembrances.

I read your statement of the affair with Strong with feelings of indignation and surprise—indignation that so worthless a wretch could have it so much in his power to molest the peace of the worthy—and surprise that you should have suffered it to annoy you to such a degree—or to fancy that your fair, generous & immaculate character needed any statement to vindicate it.

God bless you my dear Brevoort.

Your friend

W. I.

P. S. I wish a pretty high price to be put on my work; and that the Booksellers should be brought to indicate terms.

Do not press poor Thomas about the 300$ if still unpaid—let him have time. I fear I shall be sadly disappointed in the receipt of funds from the edition of the Hist. of N York—I had depended upon it for current expenses; but must now look forward to the future exertions of my pen.

London, April 1st 1819.

MY DEAR BREVOORT:—

I send a second no. of the Sketch Book. It is not so large as the first but I have not been able to get more matter ready for publication; and indeed I am not particular about the work being regular in any way. The price of this number of course must be less than the first.

I have read your article in the Feby number of the Analectic with great pleasure. I am glad you are occupying your abundant leisure in this way. It will give you an object to excite your mind & give a seasoning to existence—and I think you may both do yourself great credit and American literature service by writing occasionally.

I have been delighted with Verplanck's oration. It does him honor and shows of what he is capable. I hope he will not put our old Dutch burghers into the notion that they must feel affronted with poor Diedrich Knick-

erbocker just as he is creeping out in the new edition. I could not help laughing at this burst of filial feeling in Verplanck, on the jokes put upon his ancestors, though I honour the feeling and admire the manner in which it is expressed. It met my eyes just as I had finished the little story of Rip Van Winkle and I could not help noticing it in the introduction to that Bagatelle. I hope Verplanck will not think the article was written in defiance of his Vituperation. Remember me heartily to him, and tell him I mean to grow wiser and better and older every day and to lay the castigation he has given me seriously to heart.

Give my best regards to Mrs. Brevoort, and believe me, my dear Brevoort,

Yours affectionately

W. I.

P. S. I hope you have been able to make arrangements with Thomas for the publica-

tion of my writings. I should greatly prefer its being published by him.

If you can suggest any hints that will be of service to me in the work—any thing that will cheer & excite me, do so I beg of you. Let me know what themes etc. would be popular and striking in America; for I have been so long in England that things cease to strike me here as realities and to wear a commonplace aspect.

LONDON, MAY 13th 1819

London, May 13th 1819.

(*Portion of a missing letter from Irving to Brevoort.*)

By the ship which brings this, I forward a third number of the Sketch Book; and if you have interested yourself in the fate of the preceding, I will thank you to extend your kindness to this also. I am extremely anxious to hear from you what you think of the first number, and am looking anxiously for the arrival of the next ship from New York. My fate hangs on it, for I am now at the end of my *fortune.*

London, July 10th 1819.

MY DEAR BREVOORT:—

I recd a few days since your letter of the 9th June and a day or two afterwards yours of 2d & 8th May which had been detained in Liverpool. This last gave me your opinion of my first number. I had felt extremely anxious to ascertain it, and your apparent silence had discouraged me.

I am not sorry for the delay that has taken place in the publication as it will give me more time to prepare my next number. Various circumstances have concurred to render me very nervous & subject to fits of depression that incapacitate me for literary exertion. All that I can do at present is in transient gleams of sunshine which are soon overclouded and I have to struggle against continual damps and chills. I hold on patiently to my purpose however in hopes of more genial weather hereafter, when I will be able to exert myself more effectively.

LONDON, JULY 10th 1819

It is a long while since I have heard from my Brother William and I am apt to attribute his silence to dissatisfaction at my not accepting the situation at Washington; a circumstance which I apprehend has disappointed others of my friends. In these matters, however, just weight should be given to a man's taste & inclinations. The value of a situation is only as it contributes to a man's happiness—and I should have been perfectly out of my element and uncomfortable in Washington. The place could merely have supported me, and instead of rising as my friends appear to anticipate, I should have sunk even in my own opinion. My mode of life has unfortunately been such as to render me unfit for almost any useful purpose. I have not the kind of knowledge or the habits that are necessary for business or regular official duty. My acquirements, tastes & habits are just such as to adapt me for the kind of literary exertions I contemplate. It is only in this way I have

any chance of acquiring real reputation, and I am desirous of giving it a fair trial. I have long since been committed in print—& when once launched a man has no alternative—he must either do better or be judged by what he has done. My only regret is that my pecuniary wants have forced me to take the field before I felt myself sufficiently prepared, or my mind in a sufficient state of freedom from other cares, and fullness of literary excitement. Had I been able to save but a pittance from the wrecks of our concerns, so as to keep me above the fear of a positively empty purse, I should have felt more ease of mind and been able the better to have matured my plans. At present my efforts must all be precarious, subject to delays & imperfections.

I feel perfectly satisfied with your arrangements respecting the work, & more than ever indebted to you for these offices of friendship. I have delayed drawing on you until I should

hear further about the work; but shall have to do so soon.

I am sorry that Paulding has undertaken to continue Salmagundi without consulting me. He should have done so as I am implicated in the first series. I think it a very injudicious thing. The work was pardonable as a juvenile production, and has been indulgently received by the public. But it is full of errors, puerilities & impertinences which James should have had more judgment than to guarantee at his mature age. I was in hopes it would gradually have gone down into oblivion; but it is now dragged once more before the public & subject to a more vigorous criticism. I am glad however that James is not writing another large poem as I understood he was. He is too eager to get into print and too impatient of the labour of correction to write large poems though he has poetical thoughts in abundance.

Peter is well & desires to be heartily re-

membered to you. Letters have been written home in his behalf for the situation of Consul at Marseilles—vacant by the death of the late occupant. I hope our friends & connexions will push the matter promptly & effectually—if they cannot do this for him they can do nothing.

Give my sincere regards to Mrs. Brevoort & speak a good word for me now & then to your little boy whom I hope some day or other to have for a playmate.

Remember me to the rest of your domestic circle and believe me as ever

Affectionately yours

W. I.

London, July 28th 1819.

MY DEAR BREVOORT:—

As usual I have but a few moments left to scribble a line before the opportunity departs by which I write. I have seen a copy of the first number of the Sketch Book, which was sent out to a gentleman of my acquaintance. I cannot but express how much more than ever I feel myself indebted to you for the manner in which you have attended to my concerns. The work is got up in a beautiful style; I should scarcely have ventured to have made so elegant an *entrée* had it been left to myself, for I had lost confidence in my writings. I have not discovered an error in the printing, and indeed have felt delighted at my genteel appearance in print. I would observe that the work appears to be a little too *highly* pointed. I don't know whether my manuscript was so, or whether it is the scrupulous precision of the printer —high pointing is apt to injure the fluency

of the style if the reader attends to all the stops.

I am quite pleased that the work has experienced delay, as it gives me time to get up materials to keep the series going. I have been rather *aflat* for a considerable time past, and able to do nothing with my pen & was fearful of a great *hiatus* in the early part of my work which would have been a disadvantage. My spirits have revived recently and I trust, if I receive favourable accounts of the work's taking in America that I shall be able to go on with more animation.

I had intended to dispatch a number by this ship. It is all written out, & stitched up —but as I find you will not stand in immediate need of it, I will keep it by me for a few days as there is some trivial finishing necessary. You may calculate upon receiving it, however, by one of the first ships that sail after this.

I do not wish any given time to elapse between the numbers—but that they should

appear irregularly—indeed the precariousness & inequality of my own fits of composition will prevent that.

Should the first number come to a second edition I have noticed two trivial errors in Grammar, which I would have corrected—there are doubtless other inaccuracies—but these only have caught my eye in hastily running over the number.

Page IV of the prospectus line *third*—for—"those high honours *that* are" read—"those high honours *which* are"

Page 45. line 8 for—"and true love *will not brook* reserve" read—"and true love *never brooks* reserve."

I would wish an alteration also in a passage which is rather strongly expressed, viz: Page 21. Line 6. for. "*I question whether Columbus*" &c— "*No one that has not felt them can conceive the* delicious sensations, &c."

I look anxiously for your letter by the packet,

which must come to hand in a few days—and trust at the same time to hear something of the reception of my work—until then I shall continue a little nervous.

Give my sincere regards to Mrs. Brevoort, and do let me hear more about your domestic establishment. I am continually picturing you to myself in your character of a husband & father.

Remember me also to your worthy parents and to the Renwick circle and believe me my dear Brevoort in all moods & fortunes most affectionately yours

W. I.

LONDON, AUGUST 2d 1819

London, Aug. 2d 1819.

MY DEAR BREVOORT:—

I forward Sketch Book No. 4 to my Brother E. Irving. I find in the printed copy of No. 1 three or four inaccuracies in language in addition to those already pointed out, but I have not the number by me to correct them. These errors will take place whenever an author has not the advantage of correcting the proofs where he sees his sentiments fairly printed and brought out in a final compass under his eye. I wish you would keep an eye to see that grammatical inaccuracies do not occur. I often alter my sentiments after they are written out, which is apt to make these errors.

I send the present number with reluctance for it has grown exceeding stale with me, part of it laid out by me during a time that I was out of spirits and could not complete.

I am in great haste, and am as ever

Affectionately yours

W. I.

London, Aug. 12th 1819.

MY DEAR BREVOORT:—

I have recd your letter of July 9th, which has given me infinite gratification; but I have not time to reply to it as I could wish. I wrote to you lately expressing how much I was delighted by the manner in which you got up my work: the favourable reception it has met with is extremely encouraging, and repays me for much doubt & anxiety. I am glad to hear from you and my brother Ebenz, that you think my second number better than the first. The manner in which you have spoken of several of the articles is also very serviceable; it lets me know where I make a right hit and will serve to govern future exertions.

I regret that you did not send me at least half a dozen copies of the work, I am sadly tantalized having but barely the single copy— I have not made any determination about republishing in this country, and shall ask advice, if I can meet with any one here who can give

it me: but my literary acquaintance is very limited at present. I wish you would enquire & let me know how the History of New York sells, as Thomas is rather negligent in giving me information about it. Let him have his own time in settling for it, as I believe the poor fellow is straightened in these hard times.

You observe that the public complains of the price of my work—this is the disadvantage of coming in competition with republished English works for which the Booksellers have not to pay any thing to the authors. If the American public wish to have literature of their own they must consent to pay for the support of authors. A work of the same size & get up in the former way as my first number would sell for *more* in England and the cost of printing &c would be *less*. The Booksellers have required a large discount from you, such as is allowed on all heavy stock books. Periodical works in this country, only allow 25 per cent and popular works that promise ready

sale only 20 per ct. When I published the first edition of Knickerbocker I only allowed Bradford & Inskeep 20 pr. ct. and they take all the risk of the works not selling. I am, however, perfectly satisfied with the allowance you have made if it induces the Booksellers to be attentive to the work.—I only mention this to show that the terms on which you have published the work are fair & reasonable as literature goes. For my part if I can succeed in writing so as deservedly to please the public and gain the good will of my countrymen it is all I care about—I only want money enough to enable me to keep on my own way and follow my own taste and inclination—and as my habits are not expensive, a very little money will enable me to do that.

I drew on you lately in favour of Mr. Sam Williams at 30 days sight for *1000$*. Gen. Boyd bought the draft and I have the money.

I have sent a few days since my 4th number. I forgot to obliterate a sentence in an article

headed John Bull. It is as follows—"*He is like the man who would not have a wart taken off of his nose because it had always been there, &c. &c.*" As I do not like the simile & question whether it is a good & pleasant one you had better run a pen through it and let the paragraph end with the words "*family abuses.*"

I have mentioned several errata in the first number which were caused by negligence or alterations—I have since seen two or three others but I cannot at this moment point them out. Should another edition be published I will thank you to look over it narrowly.

Page 80. line 4. for "The dogs too—*not one of* which he recognized for *his* old *acquaintances*"—read "not one of which he recognized for *an* old *acquaintance*—"

Page 29. "No garden of thought *or* elysium of fancy"—read *nor* elysium &c

30. "not on the exclusive devotion of time & wealth *or* the quickening &c"—read—*nor* the quickening &c

41 line fifteen. "they are monarchs" read—they are *the* monarchs—perhaps the whole sentence would be better by making it in the singular—viz: "*I have observed that a married man falling into misfortunes is more apt to retrieve his situation in the world than a single man.*"

But I will not plague you with these petty troubles. These are all such corrections as an author makes when he has proof-sheets to look over—and for want of that final revision I must expect to appear ungrammatical & awkward occasionally. I feel very much obliged by Verplanck's notice of my work in the Analectic —and very much encouraged to find it meets with his approbation. I know no one's taste to whom I would more thoroughly defer.

You suppose me to be on the continent, but I shall not go for some time yet—and you may presume on letters &c finding me in England.

I have looked through James P's first number of Salmagundi & am pleased with

some parts of it—but cannot but regret he had not suffered the old work to die a natural death. He is not necessitated to publish for bread & should now take time to produce something finished and correct to the best of his ability—on which he might safely rest his reputation. He will only write himself below his real value by hasty effusions.

I must conclude for my letter is called for. Accept my dear Brevoort a thousand and a thousand thanks for all your kindnesses—I will not apologize to you for all the trouble I give you for there is something delightful to me in the idea that my writings are coming out under your eye and that you in a manner stand God father to all my children. I feel as if it were a new tie that binds us together.

Give my most affectionate regards to your wife,

And believe me ever

Yours

W. I.

London, Aug. 15th 1819.

DEAR BREVOORT:—

In great haste I enclose you an essay which I have just scribbled and which I wish inserted in the fourth number in place of one of the articles as I am afraid the number has too great a predominance of the humourous. You may insert it in place of John Bull and keep that article for the fifth number. I have not had time to give this article a proper finishing, and wish you to look sharp that there are not blunders and tautologies in it. It has been scribbled off hastily and part of it actually in a churchyard on a recent ramble into the country. The part beginning at Page 21 must commence at a separate page with a line above it such as I have marked to shew that it is a kind of note or codicil; though if you think best you may omit the codicil altogether.

Should this essay come too late for the fourth number, keep it by you for the fifth.

Do not show any of my Mss: but let everything appear in print unanticipated. In great haste,

Yours affectionately

W. I.

LONDON, SEPTEMBER 9th 1819

London, Sept. 9th 1819.

MY DEAR BREVOORT:—

I have recd this morning a parcel from Liverpool containing two parcels from you—one of four of the first number, and the other, five of the 2d number of the Sketch Book—with your letter pr Courier. The second number is got up still more beautifully than the first—I cannot express to you how much I am delighted with the very tasteful manner in which it is executed. You may tell Mr. Van Winkle that it does him great credit and has been much admired here as a specimen of American typography—and among the admirers is Murray, the "prince of Booksellers," so famous for his elegant publications. Indeed the manner in which you have managed the whole matter gives me infinite gratification. You have put my writings into circulation, and arranged the pecuniary concerns in such a way as to save future trouble and petty chafferings about accounts, and to give the

whole an independent and gentleman like air. I would rather sacrifice fifty per cent than have to keep accounts, and dun booksellers for payment.

The manner in which the work has been received and the eulogiums that have been passed upon it in the American papers and periodical works have completely overwhelmed me. They go far, *far* beyond my most sanguine expectations and indeed are expressed with such peculiar warmth and kindness as to affect me in the tenderest manner. The receipt of your letter and the reading of some of these criticisms this morning have rendered me nervous for the whole day. I feel almost appalled by such success, and fearful that it cannot be real—or that it is not fully merited, or that I shall not set up to the expectations that may be formed. We are whimsically constituted beings. I had got out of conceit of all that I had written, and considered it very questionable stuff—and now that it is so

extravagantly bepraised I begin to feel afraid that I shall not do as well again. However we shall see as we get on—as yet I am extremely irregular & precarious in my fits of composition. The least thing puts me out of the vein, and even applause flurries me and prevents my writing, though of course it will ultimately be a stimulus. I have done very little for some time past. The warm weather is against me, and I have been anxious and a little restless in mind—I shall endeavour to dispatch the fifth number soon.

By the bye—I break off in the middle of my letter lest I should again forget a matter on which I have intended to speak for these two years. You once sent me a Mss: copy of my article about Philip of Pokanoket—copied by Miss Goodrich, and I have been ungallant enough never to acknowledge so very marked a kindness. It has perpetually slipped my memory when I have been writing and has now in an unaccountable way popped into my

brain. Will you make her my very best acknowledgements—and apologize for the tardiness with which they are made—and at the same time present her with a copy of the Sketch Book & continue to send her the numbers, as the only return a poor devil of an author can make. I feel the more obliged to Miss Goodrich for the trouble she took as I had no claim on the score of acquaintanceship to such an act of civility.

I have been somewhat touched by the manner in which my writings have been noticed in the Evening Post. I had considered Coleman as cherishing an ill will towards me, and to tell the truth have not always been the most courteous in my opinions concerning him. It is a painful thing either to dislike others or to fancy they dislike us, and I have felt both pleasure and self reproach at finding myself so mistaken with respect to Mr. Coleman. I like to out with a good feeling as soon

as it rises, and so I have dropt Coleman a line on the subject.

I hope you will not attribute all this sensibility to the kind reception I have met with to an author's vanity—I am sure it proceeds from very different sources. Vanity could not bring the tears into my eyes as they have been brought by the kindness of my countrymen. I have felt cast down, blighted and broken spirited and these sudden rays of sunshine agitate even more than they revive me.

I hope—I hope I may yet do something more worthy of the approbation lavished on me.

I unexpectedly a day or two since met with William Renwick—I did not immediately recognize him he has grown so much and looks so manly. He resembles James very much in countenance. He was sent from Paris & was to set off for Edinburgh the next morning—via Liverpool. I had a couple of

hours conversation with him and was highly pleased with him—he seems to have spent his time in Europe to advantage.

Give my best regards to your wife and remember me heartily to the little circle of our peculiar intimacy. I am my dear Brevoort

Yours affectionately

W. I.

P. S. In looking over this letter I find it is all about myself—but I have no time to add any more & write about any thing else.

LONDON, SEPTEMBER 21st 1819

London, Sept. 21st 1819.

MY DEAR BREVOORT:—

By the Atlantic, Capt. Matlock, you will receive a parcel containing corrected copies of the 1 and 2nd Nos. of the Sketch Book, from which I wish the 2nd edition (if they should go to 2nd edition) to be printed.

I am at work on the 5th number, and hope to send it in time to have it published before Christmas. My mind gets running away from me now & then and breaking into subjects which are not fitted for the number in hand, and sometimes I have long intervals of *literary incapacity*, which occasions delays.

In great haste

Yours affectionately

W. I.

London, March 27th 1820.

MY DEAR BREVOORT:—

As I hear you have once more got back to New York I cannot let the packet depart without addressing you a line, though to write at this moment is to tear ideas up by the roots. I wish to heaven when you determined to unsettle yourself for a season and to venture on the salt seas, you had made England a visit instead of Charlestown. The trouble would have been about the same, and you might have shown Mrs. B. the wonders of London. I have just returned from a visit to Van Warts. I had not seen the family for more than a year and a half, during which time I had been leading a solitary life in London. I passed about ten days with them, and it was a wretched struggle to part with them again; it almost unmanned me, and I have scarcely been myself since. Their children have grown finely; and their youngest, who was born since my residence in London, is called after

me, which perhaps is the reason I think him a remarkably fine little fellow.

I lately sent E. I. a copy of the London Edition of the Sketch Book which I presume he will show you. I found some delay and difficulty in making arrangements with any popular Bookseller, so I threw it into the hands of Little Miller to be published on my own account, and let it take its chance. In spite of the disadvantages of such a mode of publication it is getting on, and is well spoken of by such of the reviews as have noticed it. There is a strong article in its favour in Blackwood's Magazine, which is by Mr. Lockhart, the author of Peter's letters to his Kinsfolk. He is shortly to be married to Walter Scott's oldest daughter—and by a letter which I lately recd. from Scott I find the article was written at his instigation. So much for an author's egotism! Any other but yourself would think I was writing from vanity. I wish I did possess more of it, but it seems my

curse, at present, to have anything but confidence in myself or pleasure in anything I have written.

Leslie's picture of "Master Slender and Anne Page," and "Sir Roger de Coverly going to Church," are getting engraved. I will put down your name for proof copies, as I am sure you will like to have them.

I had a delightful letter from James Paulding lately, dated from Washington; it brought so many recollections of early times and scenes and companions and pursuits to my memory, that my heart was filled to overflowing. What I would give to live over a few of the happy hours we have passed together! I am happy to find from Paulding's letter that he is pleasantly situated at Washington, and comfortable in his circumstances. There seems to be a pitiful and illiberal spirit indulged towards him by the writers in our reviews and newspapers. What is the state of our literature that it can afford to treat with slight

and contumely such a writer as Paulding—there is no one that has ever portrayed American scenery and characters with greater truth and beauty. It is an ungenerous and unkind thing to put him and me in contrast, as some have done, and to praise me at his expense. It is excessively painful to me, and unjust to him. I neither deserve, nor desire distinction of that kind and those that make it, do not understand our distinct and comparative merit.

But I find I am scribbling again about myself—I am in a miserable mood for letter writing and will write you more fully when in a writing humour. Give my sincerest regards to Mrs. Brevoort, and to our little knot of intimates and believe me as ever

Affectionately yours

W. I.

London, May 13 1820.

MY DEAR BREVOORT:—

I send this letter by my friend Delafield, whom I presume, you know; if not, you ought to know him, for he is a right worthy fellow. He has in charge a portrait of me, painted by Newton, the nephew of Mr. Stuart. It is considered an excellent likeness, and I am willing that it should be thought so—though between ourselves, I think myself a much better-looking fellow on canvas than in the looking-glass. I beg you to accept it as a testimony of my affection; and my deep sense of your true brotherly kindness towards me on all occasions. Do not let the likeness be seen much until it is framed. I ask this on Newton's account, who is a young artist and anxious that his works should appear to advantage, and paintings without frames have an unfinished appearance. Newton is an elegant young man and an artist of great promise. He is already noted for his fine

eye for colouring, and his extraordinary tact and facility of pencil.

I recd yesterday your letter of the beginning of April to which I will reply more at length by another opportunity. The Sketch Book is doing very well here. It has been checked for a time by the failure of Miller; but Murray has taken it in hand, and it will now have a fair chance. I shall put a complete edition to press next week, in two volumes; and at the same time print a separate edition of the second volume, to match the editions of the first already published. I have recd very flattering compliments from several of the literati, and find my circle of acquaintance extending faster than I could wish. Murray's drawing-room is now a frequent resort of mine, where I have been introduced to several interesting characters, and have been most courteously received by Gifford. Old D'Israeli is a staunch friend of mine also; and I have met with some very interesting people

at his house. This evening I go to the Countess of Besborough's, where there is to be quite a collection of characters, among whom I shall see Lord Wellington, whom I have never yet had the good luck to meet with.—Do apples swim!

Scott, or rather Sir Walter Scott, passed some time in town when he came up to get his Baronetcy. I saw him repeatedly and was treated by him with all the hearty cordiality of an old friend. I believe the interest he took in the Sketch Book and his good word for it have been of great service to it. He inquired particularly after you. He is still the same right true honest, hearty, unaffected, unassuming boy as when you knew him. Popularity has no effect on his sound head and worthy heart. He has given me repeated invitations to come down to Scotland and pass some time with him. Sophy Scott is by this time married to Lockhart.

I shall not send any more manuscript to

America, until I put it to press here, as the second volume might be delayed, and the number come out here from America. The manner in which the work has been received here, instead of giving me spirit to write, has rather daunted me for the time. I feel uneasy about the second volume, and cannot write any fresh matter for it.

I was at the Anniversary Dinner of the Royal Institution a few days since, where to my surprise I met with Brandsam—you recollect him as the *companion de voyage* of Dan Reidy on the Canada tour about sixteen years since. We renewed our acquaintance and he left his card for me this morning.

Campbell is residing in town for the present, as he is lecturing at the Royal Institution. He leaves London in three or four weeks for Tuscany where he means to pass a year.

A new poem is coming out by Lord Byron called the Prophecy of Dante—I presume it is a ghost one. He sent likewise the third &

fourth cantos of Don Juan which Murray has returned to him and begged him to reconsider & revise them. The third canto I am told is miserable in every way. The fourth possesses much beauty.

The death of our gallant friend Decatur is indeed a heavy blow. I regret extremely that the correspondence is published. It is an ill judged thing and not calculated to raise the character of either of the parties. I feel deeply for poor Mrs. Decatur, whose situation must be wretched in the extreme.

I must conclude this scrawl as Miss Delafield has entered the drawing room where I am scribbling it. Remember me to Mrs. Brevoort and to the rest of our friends, and believe me, most affectionately

Yours

W. I.

LONDON, AUGUST 15th 1820

London, August 15th 1820.

MY DEAR BREVOORT:—

I wrote to you not very long since and I sent sometime since by Delafield a portrait which I trust you have received before this.

I am now in all the hurry and bustle of breaking up my encampment, and moving off for the continent. After remaining so long in one place it is painful to cast loose again and turn oneself adrift; but I do not wish to remain long enough in any place in Europe to make it a home.

Since I have published with Murray, I have had continual opportunities of seeing something of the literary world, and have formed some very agreeable acquaintances. You know Murray's drawing-room is a complete rendezvous of men of talent; where you meet with the first characters of the day; and it has been for some time past an almost daily resort of mine.

LONDON, AUGUST 15th 1820

There have been some literary coteries set on foot lately, by some Blue Stockings of fashion, at which I have been much amused. Lady Caroline Lamb is a great promoter of them. You may have read some of her writings, particularly her Glenarvon, in which she has woven many anecdotes of fashionable life and fashionable characters; and hinted at particulars of her own story and that of Lord Byron. She is a strange being, a compound of contradictions, with much to admire, much to stare at, and much to condemn. Among the most pleasant acquaintances I have met at Murray's is a young man by the name of Mitchell, who has recently published a translation of Aristophanes and writes those very clear and very amusing articles in the Quarterly Review on the manners of the Athenians, the Greek cookery &c. He is an excellent scholar, and possesses withal a very genuine vein of delicate humour, that gives a freedom and sportiveness to his writ-

ings, not frequently found among scholastic men.

I have been very much pleased also with Belzoni, the traveller, who is just bringing out a personal narrative of his researches, illustrated with very extraordinary plates. There is the interior of a temple, excavated in a hill, which he discovered & opened; which had the effect on me of an Arabian tale. There are rows of gigantic statues, thirty feet high, cut out of the calcareous rock, in perfect preservation. I have been as much delighted in conversing with him, & getting from him an account of his adventures & feelings, as was ever one of Sindbad's auditors. Belzoni is about six feet four or five inches high; of a large frame, but a small, and, I think, a very fine head; and a countenance which, at times, is very expressive & intelligent.

I have likewise been very much pleased with a young man by the name of Cohen, who writes for the Quarterly Review—par-

ticularly those articles on the Superstitions & Mythology of the Middle Ages, on which subject, by the bye, he has undertaken to write a quarto work. He is remarkable for the extent & diversity of his knowledge, and particularly for being informed on all kinds of odd & out of the way subjects.

I have also frequently met with Mr. Hallam, whose able & interesting work on the Middle Ages you have no doubt seen, and most probably have in your library. Like all other men of real talent and unquestionable merit, he is affable & unpretending. He is a copious talker, and you are sure when he is present to have conversation briskly kept up.—But it is useless merely to mention names in this manner; and is too much like entertaining one with a description of a banquet, by merely naming the dishes. One thing I have found invariably, that the greater the merit, the less has been the pretension; and that there is no being so modest,

natural, unaffected, and unassuming as a first-rate genius.

I lately received a few lines from Henry Cary by Mr. Wallack the Actor. It gave me the greatest pleasure to recognize his handwriting, and to receive this proof of recollection. I had received some account of him a short time before from Col. Perkins, whose daughter I find is married to a brother of Cary's. I am rejoiced to find that Cary is prospering in the world. No man better deserves prosperity, and none I am sure will make a better use of it. I wish you would remember me to him heartily—I should write to him; but I have several to write to; and to tell the honest truth I find it hard work to bring myself to the task of letter writing.

I am delighted to hear that our worthy Patroon is doing well with his foundry. God bless & prosper him, and make him as rich and as happy as he deserves to be. I believe I told you in my last of a long letter, which I

received from James Paulding—it was a most gratifying one to me; and it gave me a picture of quiet prosperity and domestic enjoyment, which it is delightful for a wandering, unsettled being like myself to contemplate. Oh my dear Brevoort, how my heart warms towards you all, when I get talking and thinking of past times and past scenes. What would I not give for a few days among the Highlands of the Hudson, with the little knot that was once assembled there! But I shall return home and find all changed, and shall be made sensible how much I have changed myself. It is this idea which continually comes across my mind, when I think of home, and I am continually picturing to myself the dreary state of a poor devil like myself, who, after wandering about the world among strangers returns to find himself a still greater stranger in his native place.

He feels like one that treads alone
Your Banquet Hall deserted,
Whose lights are fled, whose garlands dead,
And all but he departed.

When you write to me next direct to the care of Beasley our Consul at Havre who will forward the letter to me wherever I may be. And now my dear fellow I must take my leave, for it is midnight, and I am wearied with packing trunks and making other preparations for my departure. The next you will hear from me will be from France; and after passing five years in England among genuine John Bulls, it will be like entering into a New World to cross the Channel.

Remember me particularly to Mrs. Brevoort, and to our intimate friends and believe me most truly & affectionately

Yours

W. I.

PARIS, SEPTEMBER 22d 1820

Paris, Sept. 22d 1820.

MY DEAR BREVOORT:—

Peter and myself have taken a part in an enterprize for navigating the Seine by Steam. It will require a little capital on our part, and Peter will enter actively into the concern. I shall put into it 5000$ which I apprehend is all that I am worth in the world. I shall take no further share; nor suffer my mind to be occupied by it; as I wish to turn my attention entirely to literature. I have engaged thus far, chiefly for the purpose of promoting Peter's views. The project will require an advance of pecuniary assistance from our friends in N York—I have just drawn on William Irving for 2000$ and have written to him at some length on the subject. I must refer you to my letter to him & letters from Peter to him & John I. for further explanations, as I am at this moment pressed for time & very much indisposed with a head ache. The purport of this letter is that you will use your exertions

to prevent my brothers from disappointing us in this business. I do not doubt their good will; but they are apt to hang fire; and delay would completely frustrate the whole enterprize as far as we are concerned; as there are men of capital here extremely desirous of entering into the scheme. If my brothers are unable to furnish the money required in time I wish you would assist them as far as your convenience will permit—at any rate do not let them delay, & postpone, & demur until the time is gone by.

Peter has now been living on hopes, and very feeble ones, for two or three years; it is pretty evident they are not likely to strike out any thing for him in America; and now that he has struck out something for himself it behooves them to back him like two brothers. But it is needless for me to multiply words to you on this subject—I know you will do all that is right and friendly in the business.

I wish you would write to me by the way of

Havre, care of R. G. Beasley, American Consul at Havre—it is a long time since I have heard from you.

I have been about a month in Paris, but having been a little restless in mind I have not enjoyed it as much as I should otherwise have done—I shall write to you again when more composed and in better mood.

Remember me with great regard to Mrs. Brevoort & believe me my dear Brevoort

Most affectionately yours

W. I.

Paris, March 10th 1821.

MY DEAR BREVOORT:—

I have this moment heard of a vessel which sails from Havre tomorrow afternoon, and have hardly time to scrawl a line, to be sent off immediately with a letter Peter is sending by the Estafetti.

I received your letter of Nov. 24th, and also letters from my Brothers on the same subject—viz. their declining to honour my drafts. I have no doubt they were influenced by the best motives, wishing to throw impediments in the way of my entering into what they considered an injudicious enterprize; but I had already committed myself; the drafts were for an interest actually purchased in the concern, and the dishonouring the drafts only prevents my fulfilling my engagements punctually, and obliges me to do it by hook & by crook, and at some loss. I have however written to them on the subject. I was actuated merely by a wish to see Peter

embarked in something that might turn out advantageous and as he seems fully persuaded that the steamboat project will do so I will leave the whole share that I have taken in it to him. I have not turned my mind much to the subject, but have left him to investigate and manage it. I hope it may open the way to something profitable for him.

You must not take amiss any little peevishness on the part of my Brothers: they have been so much worried and disheartened by the troubles of the world for some years past, that any new perplexity may fret them—you know them well, and know how worthy they are in head & mind, and how truly they esteem you; excuse therefore any little impatience they may evince in my affairs; which I am afraid give them a great deal of anxiety and trouble from the very affection which they bear me.

You urge me to return to New York—and say many ask whether I mean to renounce my

country? For this last question I have no reply to make—and yet I will make a reply—as far as my precarious and imperfect abilities enable me, I am endeavouring to serve my country. Whatever I have written has been written with the feelings and published as the writing of an American. Is that renouncing my country? How else am I to serve my country—by coming home and begging an office of it; which I should not have the kind of talent or the business habits requisite to fill?—If I can do any good in this world it is with my pen.—I feel that even with that I can do very little, but if I do that little, and do it as an American I think my exertions ought to guarantee me from so unkind a question as that which you say is generally made.

As to coming home—I should at this moment be abandoning my literary plans, such as they are. I should lose my labour on various literary materials which I have in

hand, and to work up which I must be among the scenes where they were conceived. I should arrive at home at a time when my slender finances require an immediate exercise of my talents, but should be so agitated & discomposed in my feelings, by the meetings with my friends—the revival of many distressing circumstances & trains of thought—and I should be so hurried by the mere attentions of society that months would elapse before I could take pen in hand & then I would have to strike out some entirely new plan & begin *ab ovo*. As to the idea you hold out of being provided for *sooner or later* in our *fortunate* city—I can only say that I see no way in which I could be provided for, not being a man of business, a man of Science, or in fact any thing but a mere belles lettres writer. And as to the fortunate character of our city—to me and mine it has been a very disastrous one. I have written on this point at some length as I wish to have done with it. My

return home must depend upon circumstances, not upon inclinations. I have, by patient & persevering labour of my most uncertain pen, & by catching the gleams of sunshine in my cloudy mind, managed to open to myself an avenue to some degree of profit & reputation. I value it the more highly because it is entirely independent and self created; and I must use my best endeavours to turn it to account. In remaining therefore abroad, I do it with the idea that I can best exert my talents, for the present, where I am, and that, I trust, will be admitted as a sufficient reply, from a man who has but his talents to feed & clothe him.

I have not been able to call on L'Herbette— the fact is, I am harassed by company & engagements which it is impossible to avoid & which take up more of my time than I like to spare; as well as dissipating my thoughts. I shall be obliged to quit Paris on that very account though I intend to see L'Herbette

before I leave there. I have become very intimate with Anacreon Moore, who is living here with his family—scarce a day passes without our seeing each other and he has made me acquainted with many of his friends here. He is a charming joyous fellow—full of frank, generous, manly feeling. I am happy to say he expresses himself in the fullest and strongest manner on the subject of his writings on America; which he pronounces the great sin of his early life. He is busy upon the life of Sheridan, & upon a poem. His acquaintance is one of the most gratifying things I have met with for some time; as he takes the warm interest of an old friend in me & my concerns.

Canning is likewise here with his family and has been very polite in his attentions to me. He has expressed a very flattering opinion of my writings both here and in England; and his opinion is of great weight & value in the critical world. I had a very agreeable dinner at his house a few days since, at which I met

Moore, Sir Sydney Smith & several other interesting characters.

You mention Jack Nicholson being appointed to the Franklin 74. I presume it is as Flag Captain. Does he still wear that queer cockade like a star fish in front of his hat! How I should delight to see the honest round little rogue again, and shake his little bare hand.

I have neglected to get the music you request, and am ashamed of myself for so doing, but I will get it & send it by the first opportunity.

My letter is called for & I must conclude—remember me sincerely to Mrs. Brevoort & to the rest of your family connexions & believe me my dear Brevoort

Ever affectionately yours

W. I.

P. S. I understand that you have completely withdrawn from business. Why don't you

undertake some work—an historical work—a tract of Am: history—something to occupy your time & mind & keep off ennui? You ought to make yourself an active member of all the public institutions of our city—situated as you are, with your abilities & advantages it is your duty—and it would be a source of reputation and enjoyment to you. I have repeatedly intended to write to you at some length on this subject,—you are indolent & diffident & would find the first outset difficult —but many steps would lessen the difficulty until it became mere pleasure.

Paris, April 5th 1821.

MY DEAR BREVOORT:—

I am extremely sorry to be again under the necessity of tasking your friendship in money matters. I have drawn on you this day at sixty days sight, in favour of Ezra Weeks Esq.—for one thousand dollars. It is to provide for one of the bills which my brothers dishonoured & which must come back in a few days. It would be useless to draw on my Brothers again, as they do not seem to consider it a matter of any moment or delicacy to refuse my draft; you I am confident will think otherwise. They have acted as they thought for my interest, & were no doubt persuaded that by refusing my drafts they would prevent my engaging in what they thought an injudicious enterprise. They should have known that it was too late—that I was committed—and that to refuse my drafts was to oblige me to take them up as well as I could, in a strange country, and to pay damages into the

bargain. But enough of this—had I had any other means of extricating myself from an irksome predicament I would not have again intruded on your kindness. I have tried to manage the matter in other modes & have only met with disappointment and mortification. I determined therefore to draw again on you, who, I say it in fullness and sincerity of heart, have always acted like a true Brother to me.

I have written by the Cadmus—via Havre, to my brother E. I. to replace in your hands the amount of this draft: he having ample means of mine in his hands for the purpose.

At a moment of more leisure and pleasanter feelings I will reply to your very interesting letter of Jany 8th. At present I am out of tune. These money matters always play the mischief with me.

Give my sincere regards to Mrs. Brevoort & believe me

Most affectionately yours

W. Irving.

Paris, April 5th 1821.

MY DEAR BREVOORT:—

It is with great regret that I am compelled by circumstances again to task your friendship in money matters. I have this day drawn on you at Sixty days sight, in favour of Mr. Ezra Weeks for one thousand dollars. It is to meet the return of one of my drafts which my Brothers dishonoured. To draw on them would be idle, notwithstanding that they might have funds of mine in their hands— they have shewn that they will not hesitate to refuse my drafts, whatever may be the situation in which their refusal may place me in a strange country. I am confident they do it out of a zeal for my interest; but a man may be killed even by kindness. You I feel confident regard matters of this kind in another light than that of mere interest, and know how much a man's feelings & delicacy are involved in his engagements. I know therefore that in drawing on you my bills

will be properly honoured and that you will feel a punctilious scruple in protecting my credit. I shall write to my brothers to refund you the amount of the draft in due time.

I should not, as you must be well convinced, have drawn this draft were I not fully satisfied that you would not be kept out of the money. I hope and trust that I shall in a little time be able to drag myself out of these detestable pecuniary difficulties and these eternal cross purposes in money matters, which I have been troubled with for some years past & which play the very vengeance with me. It has been my doom to contend incessantly with chills & damps which destroy all the sunshine of my mind; I can scarce get my imagination in train and feel it warming up & expanding, but some cursed worldly care or sordid mercenary entanglement comes creeping on me and wraps me all in fog. Had my mind been free and my feelings unharassed by petty cross purposes, I think I should have

done a great deal more & a great deal better than I have done—and should at this moment been free of all pecuniary difficulties. However—it is not to be helped—every man has his difficulties & cares with which he must contend.

I have recd your letter of Jany 8th to which I will reply at more leisure—it is full of interesting matter. I must conclude this letter that it may be sent off to be in time for the Ship.

Remember me very sincerely to Mrs. Brevoort and believe me my Dear Brevoort with constant recollections

Affectionately yours

WASHINGTON IRVING.

NOTE: *This letter is, of course, very similar to the preceding letter, and both were written on the same day. It was in those times not infrequently the custom to send by different ships such duplicate missives; nor is this the only such*

instance in Irving's correspondence with Brevoort. The other examples have been omitted; but the variation in language in this pair of letters would seem interestingly to justify the inclusion of both.—THE EDITOR.

Paris, April 14th 1821.

MY DEAR BREVOORT:—

I wrote you a hasty line a few days since advising you of a draft which I had drawn on you on the 5th inst. for one thousand dollars, to provide for my first bill on William Irving, returned. I shall have to draw on you again in a few days for a like sum of 1000$ to pay my second bill on W. Irving which I expect back presently. In the advice of my draft of the 5th inst. I mentioned that I should write to E. I. to refund you the amount in due time. I did write to that effect—but I think I must now request you to remain in advance to me for some little time, for reasons which will be explained to you in the course of this letter. The simple state of the case is this.

The amount for which I engaged last year in the Steamboat concern was 5000$. Of this I paid one thousand dollˢ for money due me in London, for the remaining I gave four bills on W. I. for 1000$ each—three of which

were forwarded; the fourth remains in Mr. Beasley's hands. Of the three which were forwarded, one has already come back dishonoured—to meet this I drew on you on the 5th, another is shortly expected; to meet that I shall have to draw on you in a few days—the third bill went out by the Syren and is payable in May. I trust that will be taken up by E. I. as he wrote in December last that he would be in the receipt of 1000$ in May from former sales of my works. There then remains one thousand dollars to be remitted to R. G. Beasley to make up the amount of my engagement. I trust E. I. will be able to furnish a part of that from other sales which he may have made since December. I wish you to make up any deficiency there may be, and remit the same to R. G. Beasley. You will then be in advance to me the amount of two Bills on you for 1000$ each, and such part of another 1000$ as E. I. may not be able to furnish. I trust I have made myself clearly

understood—I wish you to see that the 4000$ is fully made up—I shall not draw on you any further than the two bills of 1000$ each, trusting that my third draft dated last year on Wm. Irving, will be honoured at maturity—or that at any rate you will take care that whatever may be deficient is remitted.

I am asking this favour, my dear fellow, in very plain and direct terms, but in fact I depend on you to disembarrass me from these paltry difficulties which are teazing and perplexing me and doing me more than their pecuniary amount in positive injury. I ask this pecuniary assistance from you with confidence *first* because you have repeatedly given me the most gratifying tests of your readiness to befriend me in this way,—and *secondly* because I am certain you will not incur the loss of a farthing by it. The *first* reason is due to you & the generous affectionate interest you have ever taken in my concerns—

the *second* is due to myself for if I did not feel the certainty of being able to reimburse I must come to bread & water & sleep on a board before I would ask pecuniary favours from anyone.

I have said that it is likely you may be some little time in advance of such part of the 4000$ as you may furnish; as literary property is not immediately available. I do not however depend solely on the proceeds of the property in my brother's hands to reimburse you. I have a mass of writings by me, which, so soon as I can bring them into form and prepare them for publication, will I trust produce me something very handsome in *cash down* in England; besides augmenting my copy right property in America. I do not speak thus from any conceit of the writings themselves, but from a mere knowledge of *literary trade*. The success of the Sketch Book in England has been far beyond my most sanguine expectations & any book I

should now offer for sale, *good or bad*, would be sure to find a ready purchaser at a high price among the Booksellers. As I am anxious however to get reputation rather than money, I do not wish to hurry into print & it will take me some time yet to arrange and complete the writings I have in hand. I do not wish this circumstance to be mentioned to any one—as I never like to have anticipations of my literary appearances; I merely tell it to you; to show you the grounds on which I feel justified in asking your pecuniary aid. I trust my next work will fairly relieve me from all further embarrassment of the kind—and I shall thenceforth be able to keep ahead of my resources.

I am particular in wishing *you* to make these advances because my brother Peter has renewed his request to John T. Irving for a loan; and I do not wish his request to be interfered with; by any necessity for J. T. I. or any other of my connexions to advance

money on my account. Peter is more anxious than ever to secure an interest in the Steamboat concern, & I am very solicitous that he should have every facility. A situation in the concern is open to him by which he will be able with strict economy to clear his support, independent of the profits that may arise from his share in the property, and there is every prospect of the business being lucrative. To give plain demonstration that this is not merely chimerical I enclose you a statement of the receipt, & expenditures of the Steamboat since its establishment as a passage boat between Havre & Honfleur. It has had every possible disadvantage to contend with; having to establish its character; overcome the prejudices of the public, contend with long established packetboats; to run at high wages & expenses which it took some time to systematize & reduce,—& the whole experiment has been made during the winter months and the early part of an

uncommonly inclement & stormy spring, during which season there is comparatively but little travelling. In spite of all these things it has to my great surprise made money—for it was calculated that there would certainly be a pecuniary loss, & the only gain would be experience & an established reputation. The fine season is now commencing when the travelling is very great; and at times (from the frequency of fairs on both sides of the Seine) immense. It is a matter of course therefore that the profits must increase in proportion. A new boat, adapted to the navigation of the river is also about to run between Havre & Rouen, through a country full of population & studded with popular little towns. I think the anticipations of profit from such a navigation are perfectly reasonable.

Peter has given the whole concern the most scrupulous examination and is convinced that it holds out a prospect of advan-

tage and ultimate independence to him; which it would be difficult to find at present in any other quarter. I trust my Brothers will not rashly a second time decide from their presumptions in opposition to his investigations and shrink back from rendering such temporary aid as may place him in a path to comfortable & creditable independence for the rest of his days. I do not question for a moment their disposition to do every thing to promote both our interests; I should feel outraged by such a suggestion; but they have grown morbid & timid in money matters, from past misfortunes & they are apt to hesitate & doubt, and talk together & do nothing: and by doing nothing, play the very vengeance with those who rely on their active assistance. You hinted in one of your former letters about being hurt by some observations of my Brothers, in the course of your conversations with them on the subject of my affairs. I am at a loss to think what cause they could

find for any captious observation, in the kind & affectionate zeal you have manifested in my poor & paltry concerns. I should be loth to subject you to any thing further of the kind; but bear with them my dear Brevoort for my sake; and be assured they are only actuated by brotherly anxiety for my interests; which unluckily they have a little marred by their very anxiety.—So much for these "weary" money matters.

I have now been about eight months in Paris, living an odd sort of life—shut up in my room a great part of my time and seeing scarcely any thing of French society—circumstances having thrown me almost entirely among the Americans & the English. In fact the anxiety I have to do something more in literature, the petty involvements of myself & friends, and the wish to put an end to them also, have so agitated & perplexed my mind, that I have neither been able to enjoy society fully, nor to profit by leisure & abstraction.

I have advances made me by society, that were I a mere seeker of society, would be invaluable; but I dread so much being put out in my pursuits & distracted by the mere hurry of fashionable engagements, that I keep aloof, and neglect opportunities which I may perhaps at some future day look back to with regret. When I have launched another work and a successful one, I trust I shall feel more completely at ease both in mind & circumstances. One of my greatest sources of gratification here is the intimacy of Moore, the poet, whom I see almost every day, and who is one of the worthiest and most delightful fellows I have ever known.

Mr. Astor has been passing the winter here with his son and daughter. The former is in very bad health, and seems in a state of mental stupor. His situation causes great anxiety & distress to his father & sister; and there appears but little prospect of his recovery. Miss Astor is quite a clever, agreeable

girl. I have been quite gratified by meeting again with Mr. Astor's nephew George Ehninger whom I had not seen for several years. He has given me a world of anecdote about New York, and particularly about yourself. He will be in New York again almost as soon as this letter.

You have given me much interesting information in your last; which unluckily I cannot lay my hand on—to reply to. I am heartily glad that James Renwick is snugly nestled in the old College, which is a safe harbour of life: and a very comfortable & honourable one. The other appointments contemplated will be of great service to the College & to the literary character of the state. Verplanck is just where he should be & I hope he will cut politicks and devote himself to his pen, which will make a greater man of him than the highest political preferment to which he could fight & scramble.

I am delighted with the North American

Review: it is the best work of the kind we have ever had, and will be an interesting work to Europeans; as it is divested of national hostilities & political prejudices.

Your account of Kean's success is very interesting and I was amazed with the odd assemblage at John R's festival; Kean is a strange compound of merits & defects—his excellence consists in sudden & brilliant touches—in vivid exhibitions of passion & emotion. I do not think him a *discriminating* actor; or critical either at understanding or delineating *character*—but he produces effects which no other actor does. He has completely bothered the multitude; and is praised without being understood. I have seen him guilty of the grossest & coarsest pieces of false acting, and most "tyrannically clapped" withal; while some of his most exquisite touches passed unnoticed.

I must bring this letter to a close, that it may be in time. Give my sincere regards to

Mrs. Brevoort, and my hearty remembrances to your father & mother and the rest of your family connexion, and believe me my dear Brevoort,

Ever yours affectionately

W. Irving.

P.S. I am uncertain about my continuance in Paris, and not having fixed exactly on my summer residence I wish you to direct to me after the receipt of this, care of Henry Van Wart Esq. Birmingham.

Paris, April 21st 1821.

MY DEAR BREVOORT:—

I wrote to you lately at considerable length, explaining my reasons for drawing on you for one thousand Dollars on the 5th inst. and telling you that I should draw for a like sum in a few days. I have this day drawn a second bill of Exchange on you for 1000$—it is in favour of Saml. Williams Esq. of London, and is at thirty days sight. I had intended to have drawn at *sixty* days; but had neglected to specify that date in a letter which I wrote to Charles Williams requesting to know whether their house would cash a draft for 1000$ on you: and in reply he gave me permission to draw on them & sent me a form of a draft on you; supposing I did not know the exact sum. It was at thirty days sight—so I thought best to sign the form they sent me; and I hope the shortness of the time will not put you to inconvenience.

I shall not draw on you any more. I trust

the third draft which I drew on my Brothers last year will be taken up by my brother E. I. as he will have cash of mine to more than the amount in his hands, when it comes to maturity. I have however explained myself fully on these points in a former letter. I trust I shall not have to trouble you any more in this way; and I should not now have done so but I did not know how else to extricate myself from a pecuniary entanglement, which has occasioned me loss of time, loss of money & loss of spirits.

Peter has set off this morning for Havre to attend to the Steamboat concern. He seems very confident of its becoming a lucrative enterprise & he is by no means a sanguine man at present. I hope to God it may: and that he may be enabled once more to get his head above water.

I have mentioned in my former letter that I wished you to remain in advance of the two thousand dollars; and if necessary to assist

my brother E. I. in making up a remittance of a thousand dollars, to be sent to Mr. Beasley to take up a fourth bill which he did not send for collection last year. I do not want my brothers to advance money on account of my engagement in the concern, lest it should prevent their complying with Peter's request, lately renewed, that they would make him a loan. I expect the proceeds from my literary property in E. I. hands will soon be sufficient to reimburse you—but if not, I have some MSS. which as soon as I can prepare for publication will put me in cash from their sale in London, to make up whatever may be deficient. It may take me sometime however to complete & to arrange what I am about, my writing moods are so irregular & uncertain & I am so liable to be put out by circumstances. I do not wish it to be known that I have any thing positively in preparation, as I do not like to awaken any expectations.

I shall write to you shortly—a good sociable

hearty letter; without any of these cursed money matters in it which always wither me, soul & body, when I have to meddle with them. Remember me sincerely to Mrs. Brevoort, & believe me

Yours ever affectionately

W. I.

Paris, May 15th 1821.

MY DEAR BREVOORT:—

I send you a parcel of music for the Harp, which I hope may please Mrs. Brevoort. It was selected by a French lady who plays admirably on that instrument. She says the music &c is simple, and good, and by some of the best composers.

I wrote a long letter to you a short time since, and have not at this moment any thing very particular to add, especially as I have to dispatch this letter in a few moments by Mr. Ehninger who is on his way to Havre. I am looking impatiently for the arrival of Wm. Gracie, who will be able to give me a world of news about my friends in New York. I see that the Eitiphenia has arrived at Antwerp and Gracie must be by this time in Paris. I hope the dispatches he brings to Mr. Gallatin will be such as to produce a satisfactory arrangement between the two countries.

Mr. Ehninger is waiting for my letters and

I have yet to write one to Peter who is at Havre.

Give my best regards to Mrs. Brevoort and believe me

Yours affectionately

WASHINGTON IRVING.

London, June 11th 1822.

MY DEAR BREVOORT:—

It is a long time since I have heard from you. Your visits to Charleston seem always to interrupt our correspondence. For my part, between ill health; hard scribbling to make up for lost time and get another work into the press; and the many engagements and interruptions that consume my time and distract my mind since my return to England, I find it impossible to keep up punctual correspondences, & am now overwhelmed with epistolary debts. About three weeks since I launched a new work which you have doubtless seen long since in America. The English edition has many alterations & additions, as I got into better health & spirits after I sent my Mss. to America, and was enabled to improve the work while printing. It seems to give satisfaction here, and I am nearly killed with kindness, for I have not a moment to myself and am so fatigued with company and

dinners & evening parties, that I find it impossible to regain a perfect state of health but am still troubled with lameness & inflammation in the ancles, the lingering of my tedious malady. I shall however, soon leave this scene of bustle & dissipation & go to a watering place on the continent (Aix la Chapelle) where I hope thoroughly to reinstate my health. Within these two months past I have given myself up to society more than I have at any time since I have been in Europe, having for the last four or five years been very much shut up & at home. I was determined this spring to give myself a holiday & make use of the opportunity presented me of seeing fashionable life. I have done this to a considerable degree, though I have suffered much draw back on account of the indifferent state of my health.

The success of my writings has given me ready access to all kinds of society—and I have been the round of routs, dinners, operas,

balls & blue stocking coteries. I have been much pleased with those parties in which rank & fashion and talent are blended: and where you find the most distinguished people of the day in various departments of literature, art & science brought into familiar communion with leading statesmen and ancient nobility. By the bye I had many inquiries made after you by Sir James Mackintosh, who retains a most friendly recollection of you.

John Randolph is here and has attracted much attention. He has been sought after by people of the first distinction. I have met him repeatedly in company and his excentricity of appearance & manners makes him the more current and interesting. For in high life here, they are always eager after everything strange and peculiar. There is a vast deal too of the old school in Randolph's manners, the turn of his thoughts and the style of his conversation which seems to please very much. Young Hammond was also much liked here and I

only regretted that he did not stay a little longer. He is one of the best bred young men that I have met with from our country, and one who I think will be distinguished in the society of New York for good manners & good sense. There seems a strong disposition to be pleased with any thing American just now, among the better classes in England; and a great curiosity awakened respecting our literature &c. Among other interesting acquaintances that I have made is Mrs. Siddons. She is now near seventy and yet a magnificent looking woman. It is surprising how little time has been able to impair the dignity of her carriage or the noble expression of her countenance. I heard her read the part of Constance at her own house one evening; and I think it the greatest dramatic treat I have had for a long time past.

I shall leave this letter open, that I may add some thing more before I send it off. I have many to write to and must portion the brief

time I have, among several letters. I have written to my brother E. I. to settle the balance I am owing to you; though the debt of gratitude & affection that I owe you for all your kindness & friendship I can never repay; and indeed I feel a gratification in being in this respect your debtor. I hope you will keep a friendly eye upon my brother E. I. who, poor fellow, has again to toil his way up hill in life, with a family to weigh him down. Do him all the kind offices in your power & believe me I shall ever feel them more sensibly than if they were done to myself. I shall leave London in two or three weeks for the continent & so soon as I have reinstated my health I shall make a hasty tour, that I have been contemplating for several years past. When that is accomplished, I shall have one grand obstacle removed to my return home; and will endeavour to arrange my concerns so as once more to see my native land which is daily becoming dearer & dearer to my imagination,

as the lapse of time gives it all the charms of distance.

June 30th. I had thought to have been off to the continent before this; but yet here I am. However I am resolved to go in the course of a week. I have made so many very interesting and agreeable acquaintances of late that I find it hard to get away from them. Indeed I have got on sociable terms with most of the men of letters & the leading artists of the day, that are in London and am continually meeting with curious & entertaining characters. A few days since I was made acquainted with old Lady Jones, widow of Sir William Jones. I had no idea of her being yet alive. She is lively & cheerful & in full possession of her faculties & animal spirits. She is the daughter of the Bishop of S'Asaph who voted against the American War. She remembers Dr. Franklin who was a friend of her father's; and relates two or three anecdotes of him.

She has always been a very strong friend of America.

I lately passed a few days at the Country seat of Mr. Thomas Hope, author of Anastasius. You have read his work I presume; which I think one of the most extraordinary productions of the day. He is an extremely interesting man, somewhat shy and reserved to strangers but full of knowledge & talent and most amiable in his manners, when you become acquainted with him. He has written a vast deal, that he has never published; and is now busy upon Metaphysical work. He has voluminous travels in manuscript, and is a masterly draughtsman. It is a thousand pities that he cannot be persuaded to publish more. His travels must be full of interesting incidents and observations.

Rogers the poet returned not long since from the continent and I breakfast occasionally with him & met Crabbe and others of his literary friends. He has one of the

completest and most elegant little Bachelor establishments that I have ever seen. It is as neat and elegant, and finished, and small as his own principal poem.

July 1st. I have scrawled this letter at intervals ; for I have many to write to, & am so distracted by engagements and occupied by making preparations to go to the continent, that I have hardly a moment of leisure time or quiet thought. Matthews the comedian is coming out to make a tour in America, which I have no doubt will be a successful one. His powers of entertainment are wonderful. By his talents at imitation he, in manner, raises the dead and makes them walk & talk for your amusement; for his specimens of Zali Wilkinson, Macklin, Wilkes &c &c are among the best of his imitations. He is a very correct, gentlemanlike man in private life and at times the life of a dinner table by his specimens of characters of the day. I

shall give him letters to America & among others to yourself.

I have written a letter to that honest tar Jack Nicholson & am ashamed that I have not done so before—but really I have no time to write often, and find myself more and more getting into habits of procrastination.

I wish you would make interest, through James Renwick to get the College to employ John Miller, Bookseller, Fleet Street, as a literary agent in London. He is a most deserving & meritorious little man—indefatigable in the discharge of any commission entrusted to him: and moderate & conscientious in his charges. He devotes himself almost exclusively to American business. I would strongly recommend him to yourself should you at any time want books from London. He could hunt up any rare works; and I believe you would save money by employing him.

Give my sincere regards to Mrs. Brevoort

and remember me affectionately to the Renwicks and to your father's family.

I am dear Brevoort

Ever most truly yours

WASHINGTON IRVING.

PARIS, DECEMBER 11th 1824

Paris, Rue Richelieu, No. 89
Dec. 11th 1824.

MY DEAR BREVOORT:—

I have suffered an enormous time to elapse without writing to you; but I cannot help it. I seem no longer master of myself and my leisure. I have been toiling lately to make up arrears in letter writing but it seems as if the debt grows as fast as I strive to diminish it.

Lynch has given me many particulars about you—but seems in doubt whether or no you intend putting in effect your projected visit to Europe. I have been flattering myself with the hope that I was to see you here next Spring—have you abandoned the intention? It needs but one resolute effort to heave the anchor and set sail. When once under way you would find no difficulty; and when here you might live according to your taste & convenience and at a cheaper rate than in New York, besides having superior advantages in educating your children.

Lynch seems quite in raptures with the wonders that are breaking upon him. He is just the man to visit a capital like Paris: having had his tastes previously instructed and prepared to relish the delicacies placed before him. I cannot tell you what pleasure I have received from long chats with Lynch about old times & old associates. His animated and descriptive manner has put all New York before me and made me long to be once more there. I do not know whether it be the force of early impressions & associations, or whether it be really well founded, but there is a charm about that little spot of earth, that beautiful city and its environs, that has a perfect spell over my imagination. The bay; the rivers & their wild & woody shores; the haunts of my boyhood, both on land and water, absolutely have a witchery over my mind. I thank God for my having been born in so beautiful a place among such beautiful scenery. I am convinced I owe a

vast deal of what is good and pleasant in my nature to the circumstance.

I feel continually indebted to your kindness for the interest you have taken in my affairs and in the success of my works in America. I begin to feel extremely anxious to secure a little income from my literary property; that shall put me beyond the danger of recurring penury; and shall render me independent of the necessity of laboring for the press. I should like to write occasionally for my amusement, and to have the power of throwing my writings either into my portfolio, or into the fire. I enjoy the first conception and first sketchings drawn of my ideas; but the correcting and preparing them for the press is unknown labour, and publishing is detestable.

My last work has a good run in England, and has been extremely well spoken of by some of the worthies of literature, though it has met with some handling from the press. The fact is I have kept myself so aloof from all

clan ship in literature, that I have no allies among the scribblers for the periodical press; and some of them have taken a pique against me for having treated them a little cavalierly in my writings. However, as I do not read criticisms good or bad, I am out of the reach of attack. If my writings are worth any thing they will out live temporary criticism; if not they are not worth caring about. Some parts of my last work were written rather hastily. Yet I am convinced that a great part of it was written in a freer and happier vein than almost any of my former writings. There was more of an artist like touch about it—though this is not a thing to be appreciated by the many. I fancy much of what I value myself upon in writing, escapes the observation of the great mass of my readers: who are intent more upon the story than the way in which it is told. For my part I consider a story merely as a frame on which to stretch my materials. It is the play

of thought, and sentiment and language; the weaving in of characters, lightly yet expressively delineated; the familiar and faithful exhibition of scenes in common life; and the half concealed vein of humour that is often playing through the whole—these are among what I aim at, and upon which I felicitate myself in proportion as I think I succeed. I have preferred adopting a mode of sketches & short tales rather than long works, because I chose to take a line of writing peculiar to myself; rather than fall into the manner or school of any other writer: and there is a constant activity of thought and a nicety of execution required in writings of the kind, more than the world appears to imagine. It is comparatively easy to swell a story to any size when you have once the scheme & the characters in your mind; the mere interest of the story too carries the reader on through pages & pages of careless writing and the author may often be dull for half a volume

at a time, if he has some striking scene at the end of it, but in these shorter writings every page must have its merit. The author must be continually piquant—woe to him if he makes an awkward sentence or writes a stupid page: the critics are sure to pounce upon it. Yet if he succeed: the very variety & piquancy of his writings; nay their very brevity; makes them frequently recurred to—and when the mere interest of the story is exhausted, he begins to get credit for his touches of pathos or humour; his points of wit or turns of language. I give these as some of the reasons that have induced me to keep on thus far in the way I had opened for myself—because I find by recent letters from E. I. that you are joining in the oft repeated advice that I should write a novel. I believe the works I have written will be oftener re-read than any novel of the size that I could have written. It is true other writers have crowded into the same branch of literature, and I now begin to find

myself elbowed by men who have followed my footsteps; but at any rate I have had the merit of adopting a line for myself instead of following others.

Dec. 21. This letter has been lying by me for several days, & I have been so much occupied by other matters, as to be unable to finish it. I must now make an end of it abruptly & send it off or I shall be too late for the packet. When I left America, I left among your books a copy of Bayle's Dictionary, Burton's Anatomy of Melancholy & two or three other books of the kind—if they are still by you I wish you would give them in my name to Pierre Irving, my brother Ebenezer's eldest son, as I find he has something of a literary taste & I fancy cannot afford to purchase books—they may be very acceptable to him.

Do write to me soon & let me know if there is a chance of your coming out here in the Spring. I should regulate my own plans accordingly.

Give my sincere regards to your wife, your good old parents and the rest of your connexions and believe me dear Brevoort,

Yours ever affectionately

W. I.

PARIS, MAY 29th 1825

Paris, May 29th 1825.

MY DEAR BREVOORT:—

I have great pleasure in introducing to you my friend Mr. Edward St. Aubyn, who is about to make a tour of curiosity in our country. He is a young English gentleman of family, and one whose amiable character & manners will be sufficient to secure him a kind reception from our countrymen. I beg you will do everything in your power to render his visit to America satisfactory & agreeable. He is accompanied in his tour by Mr. Hallam, whom I have not the pleasure to know, but for whom I would likewise bespeak a hospitable reception. He is a gentleman of birth, culture & education. I am happy to find travellers of this kind turning their attention to our country.

Yours ever

WASHINGTON IRVING.

Paris, May 30th 1825.

MY DEAR BREVOORT:—

By the same packet which brings this letter will arrive two English gentlemen to whom I have given letters of introduction to you & others of my friends—one of them is Mr. Edward St. Aubyn, a very amiable young man of one of the most ancient respectable, & wealthy families of Cornwall. His father Sir John St. Aubyn, Bart. is one of the very few that are left of the classical old English gentlemen of Addison's day. He is at present at Paris with his family and I only regret that I did not know him at an earlier date for he is a perfect study, a model of the primitive courteous old gentlemen—full of worth and of the most amiable manners. The young gentleman I have introduced to you is his youngest son.

The other gentleman is a Mr. Hallam, whom I have not the pleasure to know but of whom I hear the most favourable character.

He is a fellow of Oxford, well educated of course, well bred, of good family and has lately come into a large fortune. I wish you would introduce these gentlemen to such of our towns folk as would be likely to render their stay agreeable and procure them letters for other parts of the Union.

I have long been looking for a letter from you—why don't you write to me? I had hoped before this to have seen you in France but you have not replied to my letter enquiring when you thought of coming. Lynch has been here through the Winter & Spring and has gone to Rheims to the Coronation. I had a ticket for the Cathedral at Rheims, but as I have lost all interest in Spectacles of the kind I gave it to Richard Kemble. Lynch has been in paradise as to music and at the same time has made arrangements in business which I expect will make his future.

I write this letter at the last moment, just to back the letter of introduction which I have

been writing: when I have more leisure I will write you a letter of friendly chat, without waiting for your reply to my former one, though I regret we have still to be talking across the Atlantic instead of being cosily *toe to toe* in Paris.

Do let me hear from you, even if it is but a dozen lines. Tell me what you are doing—what you are planning—whether you really intend coming to Europe or remaining entirely in America—only write & do not let me feel from your long silence as if you had forgotten me.

Give my sincere remembrances to your father and mother and tell Mrs. Brevoort that though we have never met I still hold her as a near friend.

I am my dear Brevoort

Ever affectionately yours

WASHINGTON IRVING.

MADRID, APRIL 4th 1827

Madrid, April 4th 1827.

MY DEAR BREVOORT:—

Your letter of the 1 January was one of the most acceptable that I ever received and I can hardly regret that what I owned in my letter to my Brother should have wounded your feelings since it drew forth so explicit and satisfactory an expression of what those feelings were towards me. You must however excuse the strength of my language if it was really so harsh as you described it. Had I felt less friendship for you I should have expressed myself more smoothly but I spoke from feelings deeply grieved by your apparent neglect. The letter you sent to me to the care of Mr. Welles never reached me, and for upwards of two years I had no reply to the letters and messages which I sent you. I was unconscious of having given you any cause of offence, yet could not tell how otherwise to account for such absolute and apparently determined silence. Various circumstances

had contributed to render my mind morbid and susceptible on this point; and I must confess that for a time I gave too much consequence to the attacks I had seen upon myself in the press and to anonymous letters which I received from some malevolent person seeking to persuade me that I was in a manner cast off by my countrymen. I am conscious that my long absence from home has subjected me to unfavourable representation, and has been used to my disadvantage. A man, however, must have firmness enough to pursue his plans when justified by his own conscience, without being diverted from them by the idle surmises and misconceptions of others. If my character and conduct are worth enquiring into they will ultimately be understood and appreciated according to their merits nor can any thing I could say or do in contradiction place them an iota above or below their real standard. With the world, therefore, let these matters take their

course; I shall not court it nor rail at it; but with cherished friends like yourself my dear Brevoort the present feeling is all important to me. Do not let yourself be persuaded therefore that time or distance has estranged me in thought or feeling from my native country, my native places, or the friends of my youth. The fact is that the longer I remain from home the greater charm it has in my eyes and all the colouring that the imagination once gave to distant Europe now gathers about the scenes of my native country. I look forward to my return as to the only event of any desirable kind that may yet be in store for me. I do not know whether it is the case with other wanderers, but with me, the various shifting scenes through which I passed in Europe, have pushed each other out of place successively and faded away from my mind, while the scenes & friends of my youth alone remain fixed in my memory and my affections with their original

strength and freshness. Had circumstances gone with me as I at one time anticipated, I should before this have returned home but I have been disappointed, and delayed and disheartened. I have suffered my pen for a time to lie idle, distrusting both myself and the world. About eighteen months since I was aroused from a state of morbid apathy by the failure of Mr. Williams and the apprehension that I should be involved in the distresses of the times. I again took up my pen, though with a reluctant hand, but the exercise of it gradually brought me in a more healthful tone of spirits. Since my arrival in Spain (almost about fifteen months since) I have principally been employed on my Life of Columbus, in executing which I have studied and laboured with a patience and assiduity for which I shall never get the credit. I am now advancing towards the completion of my work. How it will please the public I cannot anticipate. I have lost confidence in the

favourable disposition of my countrymen and look forward to cold scrutiny & stern criticism, and this is a line of writing in which I have not hitherto ascertained my own powers. Could I afford it, I should like to write and lay my writings aside when finished. There is an independent delight in study and in the creative exercise of the pen; we live in a world of dreams, but publication lets in the noisy rabble of the world and there is an end to our dreaming. I wish you were here to assist me with your opinion as to my labours for I am full of diffidence. My brother Peter who looks over my Manuscript is too partial a judge; he approves of things which I find it necessary afterwards completely to correct and alter.

Since my arrival in Spain I have been completely immersed in old Spanish literature. My residence under the roof of Mr. Rich the American Consul has been particularly favourable to my pursuits; he is a diligent

collector of rare works and has the most valuable works in print and manuscript of the Spanish writers. I do not know whether you have made yourself acquainted with the Spanish. It is a language you might soon acquire. I wish you would let me pick up a little collection of the best Spanish authors for you. A few hundred dollars would give you a choice collection. Two or three hundred would put you in possession of a tolerable one. Should you afterwards repent your bargain I would be glad, when in America, and with more money in my pocket than at present, to take it off your hands.

I left Paris a considerable time before the arrival of Mr. Cooper and regret extremely that I missed him. I have a great desire to make his acquaintance for I am delighted with his novels; at least with those which I have read. His Mohegans which I am told is his best I have yet to read. His naval scenes and characters in the Pilot are admirable.

I am fond of the sea and have seen a little of nautical life and am therefore more able to appreciate them. I have been charmed likewise with what I have seen of the writings of Bryant and Halleck. Are you acquainted with them? I should like to know something about them personally—their vein of thinking is quite above that of ordinary men and ordinary poets and they are masters of the magic of poetical language.

I have not heard for some time past from Paulding. His last letters were full of kind feeling and interesting anecdotes. I am glad to find that he is settled in the old homestead of the Kemble family; that scene of so many happy hours. As to his retired mode of life I fancy it is the happiest when a man has a family for his world, books at his elbow, and his pen as an amusement. I have not seen two or three of his late publications. All of those that I have met with bear his usual stamp of originality, his vein of curious and

beautiful thoughts, his turns of picturesque language, mingled with the faults that arise from hasty and negligent composition. Early habit and associations have given a charm to his writings in my eyes. I always find in them passages that strike on some chord of old remembrances.

I have not heard from Jack Nicholson for nearly a year past. I hope to meet with that worthy and classical little tar when I visit the Mediterranean west of Spain.

I was surprised last year to meet with a nephew, my brother William's son Pierre, travelling in Spain. He remained here but a short time. What I saw of him pleased me very much. By letters from him I find he will shortly return to America. I wish you would make yourself acquainted with him; and benefit him by your counsel occasionally in his pursuits and movements. He has been admitted to the practice of the law and appears to me to have excellent talents. I wish him

to sit down resolutely & perseveringly to the profession; or whatever line of life he adopts to pursue it steadily, without changing or looking behind him. I had hoped at one time to have been of service in helping forward these rising connexions; but adverse circumstances have defeated these as well as other plans; and I have nothing to console me but the recollection of good intentions which I have never been able to carry into effect.

My Brother Peter desires to be most affectionately remembered to you. His constitution has been much broken within two years past, by an illness with which he was suddenly attacked at Paris; since which time his health is delicate and frequently subject to temporary ailments. I think, however, since we have been in Spain he has greatly recovered, though it is not likely he will ever again be as vigorous as he has been.

Give my sincere regards to your wife, and my hearty remembrances to your father and

mother and the whole family of the Renwicks. I rejoice in the various indications I perceive of the high standing of the professor. I hope yet to drink a cup of kindness with you all to the memory of Auld Lang Syne—in the mean time believe me my dear Brevoort truly and affectionately

Your friend

W. I.

P.S. I have written much of this letter in an open and garrulous vein about my private feelings—I trust you will receive it with indulgence and shew it to no one. I never had any reserve with you and I write to you as I used to talk, without caring to disguise any error or weakness.

MADRID, FEBRUARY 23d 1828

(*Excerpt from a letter, the manuscript of which is missing.*)

Madrid, February 23d 1828.

MY DEAR BREVOORT:—

I have received two letters from you, the last dated December 19, and both full of the most interesting domestic intelligence. I feel under the greatest obligation to you for the kind interest you have taken in my History of Columbus. I find by the London papers it was to be published by Murray on the 11th instant. . . . If the work succeeds, it will be of immense service to me; if it fails it will be, most probably, what many have anticipated, who suppose, from my having dealt so much in fiction, it must be impossible for me to tell truth with plausibility.

I am sorry to find by your letters that you have had your share of the rubs and cares of the times; I had hoped you were safe in port and out of the reach of storms and disasters; but so it is; we are none of us completely

sheltered from misfortune. If we do not put to sea, the sea overflows its bounds and drowns us on the land. For my own part, with all my exertions, I seem always to keep about up to my chin in troubled water, while the world, I suppose, thinks I am sailing smoothly with wind and tide in my favour.

SEVILLE, DECEMBER 20th 1828

Seville, Dec. 20th 1828.

MY DEAR BREVOORT:—

Time steals away in spite of me without my being able to write to you. The manuscripts I have lately sent out to my brother must show you that I am busily occupied, and when I tell you that I have to make almost entire copies to send to England, and that I have a mass of other manuscripts in memoranda, rough drafts and half finished work, you will not be surprised that I find, when I take up the pen to write by an opportunity that presents, both head and hand so weary that it is difficult to accomplish a letter.

I thank you for your continual acts of friendship in counselling and aiding my brother in my literary concerns. Columbus has succeeded beyond my expectations, and I am gratified by the success it has had in America. I have never seen the article that appeared in Walsh's Review, and in which you so kindly assisted. Here I see nothing of what is

published in any part of the world, for books are almost interdicted in Spain. I have just sent to my brother an abridgement of Columbus, to be published immediately, as I find some paltry fellow is pirating an abridgement. Thus every line of life is subject to depredation. "There be land rats and water rats, land pirates and water pirates—I mean thieves" as old Shylock says. I feel vexed at this shabby attempt to purloin this work from me, it having really cost me more toil and trouble than all my other productions and being one that I trusted would keep me current with my countrymen; but we are making rapid advances in literature in America, and have already attained many of the literary vices and diseases of the old countries of Europe. We swarm with reviewers, though we have scarce original works sufficient for them to alight and prey upon, and we closely imitate all the worst tricks of the trade and of the craft in England. Our literature, before long,

will be like some of those premature and aspiring whipsters, who become old men before they are young ones, and fancy they prove their manhood by their profligacy and their diseases.

I am lingering here in Andalusia, waiting until the publication in England of the work on the Conquest of Granada, and occupying myself with researches in the old Cathedral library and the archives of the Indias. All the summer months have been passed by me in the country, first in a cottage about two miles from Seville and afterwards at a small country house near Port S'Mary. I had a very amiable and interesting companion in a young English gentleman, a Mr. Hall, who was travelling for his health, having broken a blood vessel. We lived like hermits, but very pleasantly. He was intelligent, well bred and accomplished. His malady confined him almost entirely in the house. Some times he rode out a little and I accompanied

him either on horseback or afoot—but the most of our time was passed at home, I writing, he learning and studying Persian and Arabic. I left him at Port S'Mary's and came up here to provide a retreat for him for the winter but in the interval he died. Riding out one day his horse became restive and reared and fell with him. The shock brought on an access of his complaint and hurried him off in the course of a couple of days. I cannot tell you my dear Brevoort how mournful an event this has been to me. It is a long while since I have lived in such domestic intimacy with anyone but my brother. I first met with this young gentleman at the house in Seville where I am now boarding and was insensibly interested in his precarious situation, and won by the amiableness and correctness of his manners. I could not have tho't that a mere stranger in so short a space of time could have taken such a hold upon my feelings.

Do let me hear from you and give me a little news of my old friends. It is a long time since I have heard from Paulding. He owes me a letter, but I do not stand upon points of the kind. I have intended repeatedly to write to him, but when I have the disposition I have not the time and when I have the time I have not the disposition, for there are moods in which I find it impossible to scrawl the merest line of an epistle.

What has become of Jack Nicholson? I presume I have been remiss in my correspondence with him since he no longer favours me with any of his epistles, though no man could value them more. What is Gouv Kemble doing—and Harry Ogden? How does Mrs. Renwick wear with the times, does she still keep up a cheerful countenance and a good heart? How does the worthy Professor, who is daily accumulating academic honors? In a word, let me hear a little of the little world of our ancient intimacy; if it is not quite worn

out and thrown aside by you. I fear I shall find it difficult on my return to tack a new course of intimacies and friendships to the tail of the old one. Such an interval has taken place that the two ends will hardly join together.

I am interrupted and must conclude. Give my kindest regards to your wife, my sincere remembrance to your worthy parents and my good will to all others who care for me, and believe me, my dear Brevoort,

Ever your faithful and affectionate friend

WASHINGTON IRVING.

Alhambra, May 23d 1829.

MY DEAR BREVOORT:—

I have this morning received your most welcome letter of the 30th March which you forwarded to my brother Peter. You see I am still lingering in Spain, and I declare to you I feel so much interested by this noble country and noble people, that though I have from time to time made resolutions and preparations to leave them, I have as often postponed my departure. By the date of my letter you will perceive I am *royally* quartered. I came to Granada about three weeks since to pass a little time here during the finest season of the year, in company with a young Russian Prince, the Secretary of the Russian Legation; and the Governor of the Alhambra, finding us poorly lodged in the town, gave us permission to take up our residence in a corner of the old Moorish palace which had been assigned to him for his quarters, but which he had not taken possession of. Here

then I am, nestled in one of the most remarkable, romantic and delicious spots in the world. I have the complete range and I may say control of the whole palace, for the only residents beside myself are a worthy old woman, her niece and nephew, who have charge of the building, and who make my bed, cook my meals, and are all kindness and devotion to me. I breakfast in the saloon of the ambassadors, or among the flowers and fountains in the Court of the Lions, and when I am not occupied with my pen, I lounge with my book about these oriental apartments or stroll about the courts and gardens and arcades, by day or night with no one to interrupt me. It absolutely appears to me like a dream; or as if I am spell bound in some fairy palace.

The very evening of my removal to the Alhambra my nephew Edgar Irving, midshipman of the navy, made his sudden appearance here to my great gratification. He will

probably reach New York much about the same time with this letter, and will be able to give you some account of me. He remained with me about four days, and then I started him off to make a little tour through the mountains and to Cordova, Seville & Cadiz, and to embark for home at Gibraltar. I cannot tell you how gratifying it was for me to meet with one of *my own flesh and blood* after so long a separation. Had I been in a gayer place I should have been tempted to retain him longer; but I could not expect him to have the same fondness for a mere solitude that I have. The Prince took his departure the day preceding that of my nephew, and since they have both gone I have remained completely shut up within the walls of the old Palace. I think I shall be tempted to remain here for three or four weeks longer at least. I wish to enjoy the delights of this place during the hot weather, and to have a complete idea how those knowing Moors enjoyed themselves,

in their marble halls, cooled by fountains and running streams.

I thank you for the information you give me concerning the publication of my works. I am not sorry that the publication of the second edition of Columbus is retarded, as I may have to make a few alterations and corrections, in consequence of having just recd Mr. Navarrete's third volume of documents, containing some relative to Columbus. For the same reason I am willing the abridgement should be held back. If there is any particular reason, however, for hastening the publication of the latter, let it take place, as the corrections would not be very material.

During my sojourn in the Alhambra I shall have leisure and quiet to look over my manuscripts, and to get them in order so as to present some other work to the public before long. I shall also note down the corrections to be made in the History of Columbus. I mention these things to you because I consider

it the same as mentioning them to my brother E. I. and I doubt whether I shall have time to write to him by this post.

Your particulars concerning our ancient cronies are peculiarly gratifying to me. Indeed my dear fellow you cannot imagine how I dote on the remembrance of old friends and old times. I have laughed heartily at your account of that bulbous little worthy Jack Nicholson. Give my hearty remembrances to him and tell him I set as much store by him as ever, notwithstanding he does not write me any more letters. I am rejoiced to hear that Sam Swartwout has at length come uppermost in the political wheel,—what a whirligig world we live in!—and then to have Harry Ogden for his faithful squire! I think it a pity fat Jack Falstaff had not lived in these piping times. I'll warrant he would have had the robbing of the exchequer.

Your account of yourself is particularly encouraging—"that you might pass yourself

off for a fresh bachelor of 35!" God bless us! Who knows but I may do the same—though I must confess I think I am beginning to wax old as doth a garment, and am, like Jack Nicholson, gradually increasing in the belt. However, I begin to grow hardened and shameless in the matter, and have for some time past given up all gallanting, and declared myself an absolute old Bachelor.

You seem to be all masking mad in New York. I am afraid our good city is in a bad way as to both morals and manners. What the cities of the old world take moderately and cautiously she gets roaring drunk with. I must say all this rioting and dancing at the theatres with public masquerades every night in the week has a terribly low lived, dissolute, vulgar look. We are too apt to take our ideas of English high life from such vulgar sources as Tom & Jerry and we appear to be Tom and Jerrying it to perfection in New York.

Give my kindest remembrances to your

good parents and to all the Renwick family. It gives me sincere delight to hear that Mrs. Renwick enjoys such good health and good spirits. My dear Brevoort the happiest day of my life will be when I once more find myself among you all. We will then talk over old times, and vaunt as much of our old feats and old frolicks as did ever Master Shallow and fat Jack. I have got so entangled however in literary undertakings here in Europe that I cannot break away without interrupting all my schemes, and sacrificing profits which a little time, patience, and perseverance will enable me to realize and which I trust will secure a moderate independence for the remainder of my existence. This alone keeps me from immediately returning. My dearest affections are entirely centered in my country.

Your affectionate friend

WASHINGTON IRVING.

Valencia, Aug. 10th 1829.

MY DEAR BREVOORT:—

I had intended writing to you from the Alhambra, but the time for my departure arrived before I had half finished with my correspondents. I cannot express to you how sensibly I feel the interest you have taken in my late appointment; I am gratified that my brothers consulted you concerning it, as I know you to consider my affairs both with brotherly feeling and with knowledge of the world. As it appeared to be the general wish of my friends that I should accept this appointment I have done so; but I can assure you when I took my last look at the Alhambra from the mountain road of Granada, I felt like a sailor who has just left a tranquil port to launch upon a stormy and treacherous sea. I shall give the experiment a trial; but I do not think I am fitted for public life; and doubt whether I should not serve my country, my friends and myself better by continuing on in

the tranquil and retired career of literature. Perhaps I may be able to combine both—we shall see. I have been infinitely amused with the source from whence this tide of honour and employment has suddenly flowed upon me: the patronage of little Jack Nicholson. How whimsically the affairs of this world are influenced. I declare to you that the oddity of the circumstance had some effect in putting me in good humour with the appointment. I felt quite tickled with the idea of having the honest little tar for a political patron. I have reason to believe, however, that my old chum Paulding who was at Washington at the time had a main hand in promoting the appointment.

I left the Alhambra on the 29th July, after having passed between two and three months there in a kind of Oriental dream. Never shall I meet on earth with an abode so much to my taste, or so suited to my habits and pursuits. The sole fault was that the softness of the climate, the silence and serenity of the

place, the odour of flowers and the murmur of fountains had a soothing and voluptuous effect that at times almost incapacitated me for work, and made me feel like the Knight of Industry, when so pleasingly enthralled in the Castle of Indolence.

I set out from Granada on my long journey for England in company with a young Englishman of one of the first families of Staffordshire, Mr. Ralph Sneyd. He is an Oxonian, and well bred, intelligent, and amiable. We have made our journey to this place in a kind of covered cart called a Tartana drawn by a mule. In this we put two mattresses, on which we lolled as we were trundled along the mountain roads at the average of about twenty eight miles a day. The heat of the weather at this season of the year made it inadvisable to travel on horseback; and as it was we were obliged to be there several hours during the heat of the day and travel very early in the mornings and in the evenings. We have

traversed the Ancient Kingdom of Murcia: have touched at Alicante and passed over a part of the rich plain of Valencia. In our route we bordered along the country lately desolated by earthquakes, where the earth is still in a feverish state, and saw traces of the effects of the recent convulsions in the walls of the churches, convents & houses. Though the towns through which we passed were not those which had most suffered, yet we found many of their inhabitants still living in huts of reeds and clay slightly put together so as to yield to any agitation of the earth. We heard one still morning the rumbling of an earthquake but were not sensible of any movement of the earth. We have since heard that it was more violent in another part of the country. Our route has led us through many very wild and picturesque scenes & many delicious valleys, but the general character of the Spanish scenery is stern, mountainous and arid; partaking more of a melancholy

sublimity than of luxuriance or beauty. We have been through some of the tracts, also, most noted for robbers but have escaped without being obliged to pay toll, though for the greater part of the way we had no other escort but a long legged Portuguese with a musket, who acted as our servant along the road. Travelling through the greater part of Spain is pretty much the same as it was in the days of Don Quixote. The posadas and ventas have seldom any thing to give you; you must either bring your provisions with you or forage for them through the village. Our beds at night were the mattresses we brought in the cart, which were spread on the floor and we laid on them in our clothes. The mattresses of the Inns, where they do possess such conveniences, are not to be trusted at this season of the year.

We have now arrived at the Diligence road and shall henceforth travel more rapidly. Tomorrow evening we start in the Diligence

for Barcelona, and in the course of a few days I hope to cross the Pyrenees and find myself in the gay country of France. I assure you, however, I shall leave Spain with feelings of great regret. A residence of between three and four years in it has reconciled me to many of its inconveniences and defects, and I have learned more and more to like both the country and the people.

Barcelona, Aug. 14. We arrived here early this morning—after a most interesting journey through the populous, industrious and beautiful province of Catalonia; which is totally distinct in its characteristics from the other parts of Spain. We wait here three or four days for our Trunks, which we forwarded from Granada by the Corsarios, or company of armed Muleteers, for more security from robbers. When we receive these we shall resume our route and in the course of a couple of days cross the frontiers.

London. Oct. 6th. I have had no time to continue this letter. My journey from Barcelona to Paris was a tremendous fag: day and night for nine days without going to bed. I found Peter at Paris in fine health & spirits. He has not looked, or been so hearty & merry for years. I staid in Paris a little more than a fortnight: when hearing that the Frigate had arrived at Portsmouth with Mr. McLane I set off to meet him at London. I am perfectly delighted with him, and doubt not we shall live most happily together. As yet we are unsettled: he has been ill, and is yet at a hotel: but I trust in the course of another week he will be comfortably fixed in his own house and I in lodgings close by him. When I have more leisure I will write to you again, in the mean time believe me as ever my dear Brevoort

Most affectionately yours

WASHINGTON IRVING.

London, May 31st 1830.

MY DEAR BREVOORT:—

I look forward with the greatest delight to the prospect of our once more meeting and should have endeavoured to be at Havre to greet you on your landing on this side of the Atlantic, but I am so trammelled by official and other duties that I find it impossible to leave England. Do let me hear from you, and tell me your plans, and whether it is probable you will soon pay London a visit. Peter is with me and in excellent health & spirits, and will be rejoiced to take you once more by the hand. I am writing this in excessive haste to send it by a gentleman about to set off for Havre where I hope he will deliver it into your own hands. In such case I would recommend him to your acquaintance and esteem, as a man of great worth & respectability. The bearer is Dr. de Butts professor of chemistry at the University of Maryland. It is probable, however, that

you are already acquainted with him or at least know him by reputation.

With kindest regards to Mrs. Brevoort, I am my dear Brevoort

Most affectionately yours

WASHINGTON IRVING.

London, March 31st 1831.

MY DEAR BREVOORT:—

I will not pretend to apologize to you for not having written to you for so long a time. I am weary of apologizing on this head and by this time my friends must know the nature of my life in this tremendous Babel, which leaves me no leisure or quiet. As long as I remain in London I shall be worth nothing either to my friends or to myself & this I foresaw & foretold when I was advised to come here. However, this like all things else will have its end. I have heard from various quarters of your being very ill, and at length a letter from Jack Nicholson gave me an intimation of what I had hoped & surmised, that you had in fact submitted to the operation of which you spoke when in London. I am heartily rejoiced to hear it, and congratulate you with all my soul at having passed through the ordeal. I trust it will have a cheering effect upon your whole existence; for that is

but a dismal kind of life, that has a threatening cloud of malady always lowering on the horizon. Do drop me a line and tell me how you find yourself in health & how your spirits are affected by this relief from an old foe.

I am just recovering from a four days fit of illness—rather a long spell for my regular constitution. I believe it was brought on more by the excitement & the hurry & harassing life I lead here in this time of political, literary and fashionable tumult, than by anything else. The misfortune with me is that I embark in it with ill will, and worry myself by trying to stem the current, which after all, bears me away in spite of every exertion.

I am looking daily for Jack Nicholson, who will no doubt come charged to the very muzzle with all kinds of revolutions, conspiracies, brawls, & battles, having taken all the belligerent towns of Belgium and Holland in his route. I expect to see him rounder and more

robustuous than ever, having all the affairs of the world under his belt. What Jack will have to relate when he returns to New York! I think, like the Innkeeper in Rabelais, he ought to invite all the Quidnuncs of Wall Street to a general meeting to see him burst.

We are in the beginning of an eventful week. This evening will determine the fate of the present cabinet, which is in a tottering condition, & we are looking daily for decisive news from Paris. We must have tidings of moment, too, from Poland though I fear we shall have dismal news from that quarter. However, the *great cause of all the world* will go on. What a stirring moment it is to live in. I never took such intense interest in newspapers. It seems to me as if life were breaking out anew with me, or that I were entering upon quite a new and almost unknown career of existence, and I rejoice to find my sensibilities, which were waning as to many objects

of past interest, reviving with all their freshness and vivacity at the schemes and prospects opening around me. I trust, my dear Brevoort, we shall both be spared to see a great part of this grand though terrible drama that is about to be acted. There will doubtless be scenes of horror & suffering, but what splendid triumphs must take place over these vile systems of falsehood in every relation of human affairs, that have been woven on the human mind & for so long a time have held it down in despicable thraldom.

Do, when you have leisure, as leisure *you* surely must have in abundance, write me a line and do not stand upon the ceremony of my answering you regularly. If you could but know how I am cut up to very bits in my time and how totally I am destitute of leisure you would not stand upon any ceremony of the kind with me.

I received your letter by Mr. —— the gentleman who brought the pack some time since.

There was a long letter too from the authoress which it was quite out of my power to answer. I left the poem with Murray, on my going out of town, saying everything I could in its praise. He wrote me word that he had declined publishing it, as he did not think it calculated to advance either the author's interests or reputation. I am continually applied to by writers to help their works into the press—but there is no person less able to do so than I. My only acquaintance among the publishers is Murray, who is the most difficult being on earth to please—as to the other publishers, such as Colburn & Bentley, they are rather hostile to me than otherwise,—because, I have repeatedly declined their overtures and offers of higher prices if I would desert Murray, etc.

I enclose you a letter from the post office at Paris left at my lodgings a few days since & which must relate to some letter of y urs.

Give my kind remembrances to Mrs. Bre-

voort, Mr. Cannon, my little friends Laurie and Meta, etc. & believe me, my dear Brevoort,

Ever yours

W. Irving.

Let me have your address at Paris accurately.

London, July 5th 1831.

MY DEAR BREVOORT:—

I have barely time to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 30th ult. which gives me the satisfactory intelligence of your safe return. You have made a most interesting tour and must have heaped in matter for after reflection, through eyes and ears. I shall feel right glad to see you again in England. Peter is with me & will remain with me until I am relieved from my present post, which I pray God may be as soon as possible; having but little ambition for official honour and a rooted aversion for all official responsibility, official ceremonials and diplomatic & court humbug. I am just recovering from a severe attack of the grippe, which has been as prevalent here as in Paris. Peter is likewise gradually extricating himself from its clutches.

Mr. Van Buren is spoken of as successor to Mr. M'Lane; though it is uncertain as yet whether he will accept. At all events he will

wait until Mr. M'Lane's return. I hope he will accept, as I shall then in all probability be relieved in the course of September.

Mr. M'Lane has not absolutely accepted the situation offered him in the cabinet; though I have little doubt he will do so. He will be a tower of strength to the cabinet & an invaluable man for the nation. I have never known a man of higher & purer principles—and they are combined with admirable talents for public life. His departure is deeply regretted here by the first statesmen of both parties; and he leaves a name behind him that will not readily be forgotten.

The article in the Quarterly on Moore's Byron was written by Lockhart.

My brother Peter desires to be most affectionately remembered to you all.

Ever my dear Brevoort

Yours truly

W. I.

LONDON, NOVEMBER 2d 1831

London, Nov. 2d 1831.

MY DEAR BREVOORT:—

I send you several letters received since your departure, by which it appears that Mrs. Brevoort expected you to remain some time longer in London. What a pity you disappointed her. Had you remained a day or two longer you might have seen the King and partaken of a roast goose which I had for dinner yesterday, and the savour of which alarmed the whole neighborhood.

Yours
W. I.

I have seen Han Powell and his wife. She has weathered the years that have elapsed since I saw her surpassingly well and is still a very handsome woman. Powell looks well, but hard and rather grey. I think marriage has improved him.

IRVINGTON-ON-HUDSON, 1838

MY DEAR PROVOST:—

I go up to Gouv Kemble's this afternoon in the Ohio—and take my niece Miss Paris with me—to pass a few days. Cannot you put up a shirt in a pocket handkerchief & go with us? William Kemble likewise goes up.

If you cannot get ready for this afternoon (5 o'clock) come up tomorrow.—We will visit Mrs. De Rham at her new establishment in the Highlands—look up Uncle Sam's quarters and play the very ——

Yours ever

W. I.

PARIS, JULY 1st 1842

Paris, July 1st 1842.

MY DEAR BREVOORT:—

I have barely time to scribble a few lines in the office of the Legation here, in reply to your letter by Carson. I am delighted to have him with me and shall endeavor to do all that you wish respecting him. My heart warms toward him not merely on his own account, but also on your own. He seems like a new link in our old friendship which commenced when we were both about his age or even younger; and which I have always felt as something almost fraternal. Hamilton I perceive has already taken a strong attachment to him. The other member of my diplomatic family, Hector Ames, is an excellent little fellow; quiet modest, yet manly and intelligent. I think they will all agree well together and form a very pleasant *état major.*

As they require some little time to fit themselves out I shall linger some eight or ten days longer at Paris; but I am anxious to get to

my post, and relieve my predecessor Mr. Vail, who wishes to get to the mountains with his family, for the health of his children. I am desirous also of forming my establishment and feeling myself once more settled. The unsettled life I have led for some months past begins to be extremely irksome. I have enough to do to bother me, yet no settled occupation to interest me. My mind is perplexed by arrangements for my domestic establishment, and solicitude about my new career, any* with all this I am harrassed by the claims of Society, which, with all my exertions, I cannot fight off. Paris & London are terrible places for these kinds of claims, which cut up ones time, disturb ones quiet, and render life a continual round of empty toils. I am amused with the solicitude of our friend Thorn on my account who thinks I am turning my back upon fortune, and ruining my prospects in life by neglecting to follow up the friend-

*and.

ships proferred me in saloons. He could restrain his feelings no longer a few evenings since, at an evening party where the Duchess of Grammont had sought an acquaintance with me and held me for some time in very amiable conversation. On leaving her Thorn took me aside and implored me leave a card the next day for the Duchess and at the same time read me a most affectionate lecture on my neglect on this piece of etiquette with respect to various other persons of rank. He attributes all this to my excessive modesty: not dreaming that the empty intercourse of saloons with people of rank and fashion could be a bore to one who has run the rounds of society for the greater part of half a century and who likes to consult his own humours and pursuits.

I shall endeavor, when fixed at Madrid, to strike out some line of literary research and occupation for Carson according to your wish. In the mean time he will be seeing continually

new places, new people, and new customs and usages—at least new to him.

At a moment of more leisure I will write to you more fully—Remember me most kindly to Mrs. Brevoort and the young folks.

Yours ever my dear Brevoort

WASHINGTON IRVING

BORDEAUX, NOVEMBER 26th 1843

Bordeaux, Nov. 26th 1843.

MY DEAR BREVOORT:—

I received your most kind and welcome letter some short time before leaving Paris, and should have answered it immediately, but I was in one of those moods when my mind has no power over my pen. Indeed I have long owed you a letter and have intended to write to you; but correspondents multiplied fearfully upon me, and my pen was tasked diplomatically and otherwise, on my arrival at Madrid to such a degree as to fag me out, and to produce the malady which has harassed me for nearly a year past. I am now on my way back to my post after between two and three months absence. I set out in pursuit of health and thought a little travelling and a change of air would "make me my own man" again; but I was laid by the heels at Paris by a recurrence of my malady, and have just escaped out of the Doctor's hands sufficiently recovered to get back to my post; where I

hope, by care and medical treatment to effect my cure.

This indisposition has been a sad check upon all my plans. I had hoped, by zealous employment of all the leisure afforded me at Madrid, to accomplish one or two literary tasks which I had in hand; and thereby to encrease my pecuniary means so as to enable myself by and bye to return home and live in quiet in the bosom of my family. A year, however, has now been completely lost to me; and a precious year at my time of life. The Life of Washington, and indeed all my literary tasks have remained suspended; and my pen has remained idle; excepting now and then in writing a despatch to Government or scrawling a letter to my family. In the meantime the income which I used to derive from farming out my writings has died away; my monied investments yielded scarce any interest; and I really do not know what would have become of me and of those dependent upon me, if

Uncle Sam had not in a critical juncture taken me under his wing and made me a diplomatist! However, thank God, my health and with it my capacity for working are returning. I shall soon again have pen in hand and hope to get two or three good years of literary labour out of myself. Times are improving in America, and with them may improve the landed property which I hold. I may again find some bookseller to take a lease of my published works; and thus, by hook and by crook, may be enabled to return home and spend some few years with my kindred and friends before I die.

Carson will give you an account of diplomatic and household affairs at Madrid. I was extremely sorry to part with him, but I could not advise him to stay, where there was no career nor regular pursuit opening to him. I found him all that you represented him. Pure, amiable, intelligent, variously informed and accomplished, and of the strictest principles.

He is a youth whom it is impossible to live with intimately and not become attached to. His only defects are want of energy and perseverance, and a too great diffidence of himself. These prevent his undertaking great things, or following out his enterprises when undertaken. He has been highly esteemed by such persons here as became acquainted with him—among them some men of science. Indeed wherever he gives himself a chance of being known he will be appreciated; and when once he has gained a friend he will never lose him.

I do not know whether you speak in jest or earnest about the popular view of my conduct on the occasion of the diplomatic intervention for the safety of the little Queen during the late siege of Madrid. My conduct was dictated at the time by honest and spontaneous impulse, without reference to policy or politics. I felt deeply for the situation of the Queen and her sister and was anxious that their persons

should be secured from the civil brawls and fightings which threatened to distract the city and invade the very courts of the royal palace. In all my diplomacy I have depended more upon good intentions and frank and open conduct than upon any subtle management. I have an opinion that the old maxim "*Honesty is the best policy*" holds good in diplomacy!

Thus far I have got on well with my brother diplomatists; and have met with very respectful treatment from the Spanish Government in all its changes and fluctuations. I have endeavored punctually to perform the duties of my office and to execute the instructions of Government and I believe that the archives of the Legation will testify that the business of the mission has never been neglected. I have not suffered illness to prevent me from keeping every thing in train; and indeed my recovery has been retarded by remaining at my post during the revolutionary scenes of last summer, though urged by my physicians

to spend the hot months at the watering places in the mountains. I do not pretend to any great skill as a diplomatist; but in whatever situation I am placed in life, when I doubt my skill I endeavour to make up for it by conscientious assiduity.

While I was in Paris in driving out one day with my niece in the Champs Elysées, we nearly ran over my old friend Rogers. We stopped and took him in. He was on one of his yearly epicurean visits to Paris to enjoy the Italian opera and other refined sources of pleasure. The hand of age begins to bow him down, but his intellect is clear as ever, and his talents and taste for society in full vigor. He breakfasted with us several times and I have never known him more delightful. He would sit for two or three hours constantly conversing and giving anecdotes of all the conspicuous persons who had figured within the last sixty years; with most of whom he has been on terms of intimacy. He has refined

upon the art of telling a story until he has brought it to the most perfect simplicity, where there is not a word too much or a word too little; and where every word has its effect. His manner too is the most quiet, natural and unpretending that can be imagined. I was very much amused by an anecdote he gave us of little Queen Victoria and her nautical vagaries. Lord Aberdeen has had to attend her in her cruisings very much against his will; or, at least, against his stomach. You know he is one of the gravest and most laconic men in the world. The Queen one day undertook to reconcile him to his fate. "I believe my lord" said she graciously "you are not often sea sick." "*Always* madam" was the grave reply. "But"—still more graciously, "Not *very* sea sick." With profounder gravity—"VERY Madam!" Lord Aberdeen declares that if her Majesty persists in her cruisings he will have to resign.

I rejoice to hear of Mrs. Brevoort's improved

health and think you are right, should you find the sea coast of Long Island favorable to the health of your family, to set up a retreat there. You might build a very pleasant summer lodge at a cheap rate; and I can say from experience that a man has ten-fold more enjoyment from any rural retreat that belongs to himself than from any that he hires as temporary sojourn.

Give my kind remembrances to Mrs. Brevoort and to all the young folks, and believe me my dear Brevoort

ever most affectionately yours

WASHINGTON IRVING.

I have not suffered illness to prevent me from keeping every thing in train; and indeed my recovery has been retarded by remaining at my post during the ~~popular~~ revolutionary scenes of last summer, though urged by my physicians to spend the hot months at the watering places in the mountains. I do not pretend to any great skill as a diplomatist; but in whatever situation I am placed in life, when I doubt my skill I endeavor to make up for it, by conscientious assiduity.

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Remember me likewise to your worthy parents, who are enjoying the greatest blessing of old age, that of seeing their children prosperous and happy.

I feel greatly indebted to my good friend Mr Bradish for dreaming so often about me, and indeed I value it as no trifling instance of kindness & good will that she who has so many domesticated with her occasionally, should bestow such particular recollection upon me. I am glad to hear such favourable accounts of Eliza's health, and that the dissipation of Elizabethtown has agreed with her so well - How I should delight to spend a cosey hour in the little parlour! Well-well! we shall all get together again by & by or many times over more.

You mention the prosperity of the Theatre. I wish you would interest yourselves for the Johnsons, they are old friends of mine and both Peter & myself are very anxious for their success. Ellen Johnson is a charming girl and I think must prove a good actress. I have never seen her perform. How is Bibby making out - I presume he is giving touches of Kean as I perceive he acts some of Kean's characters - How does his affair with Mary Bailey go on.

Give my best regards to the worthy Governor & the rest of the household. I am,

my dear Brevoort

Yours ever

W.P.

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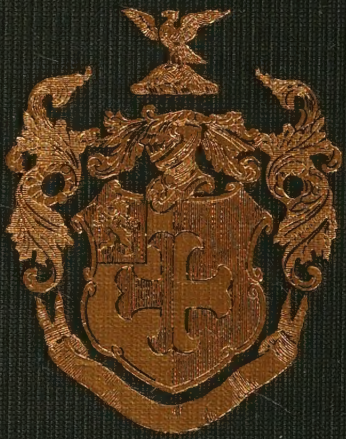
Irving, Washington.
Letters of Washington Irving.